GameTime

The Buyer's Guide to Games

Premiere Issue!

Issue #1

Play your cards right...

Plus:

You could win *Magic* cards and other games!

Origins Award Winners

We review:

- Bosworth
- C•23
- Monsters Ravage America
- Noble Armada
- Vampire: The Masquerade

AND MORE

MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ ADVENTURE GAME

...and you can be a super-hero

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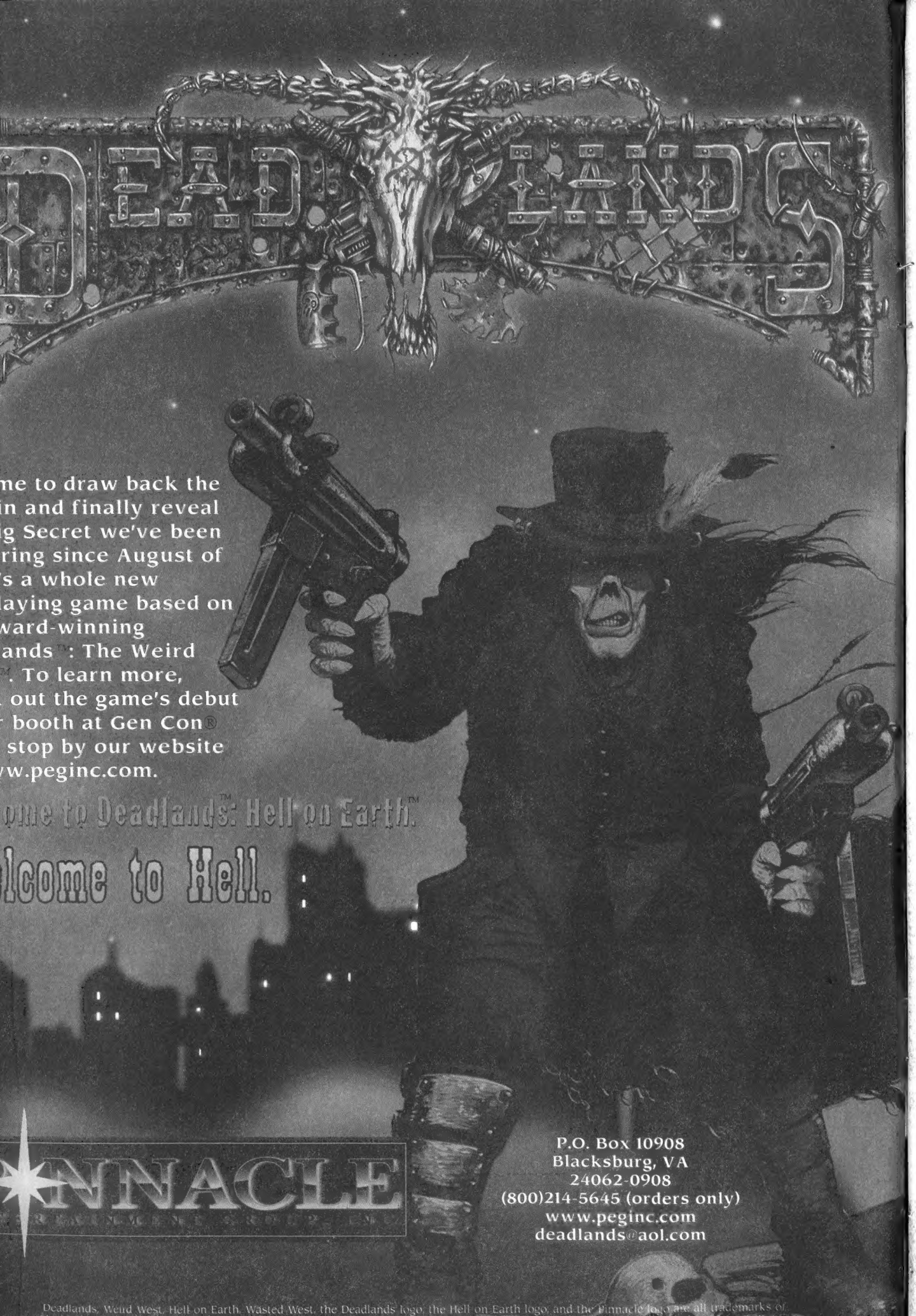
Supplement to Comics Buyer's Guide #1290 • August 7, 1998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Printed in the USA

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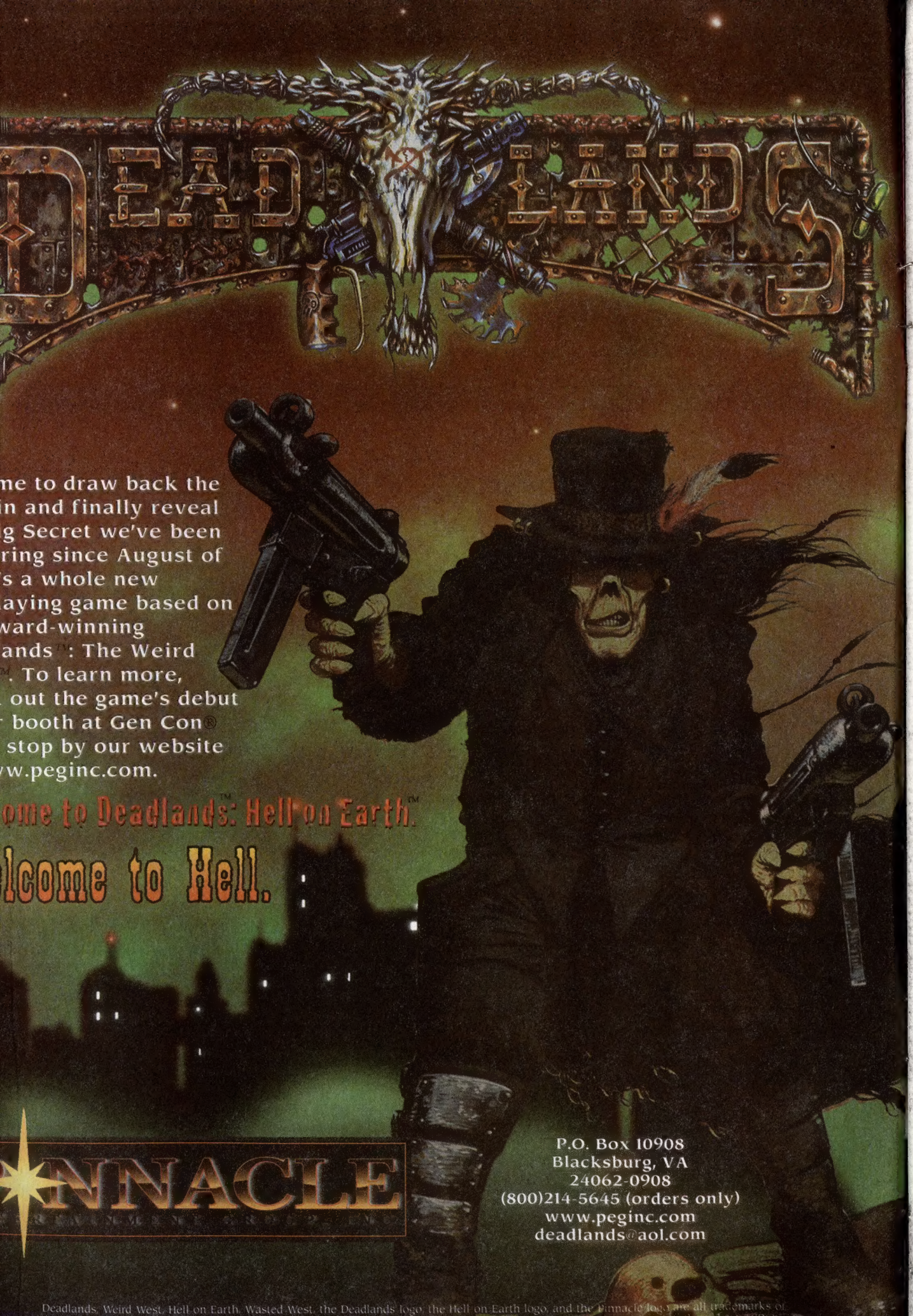
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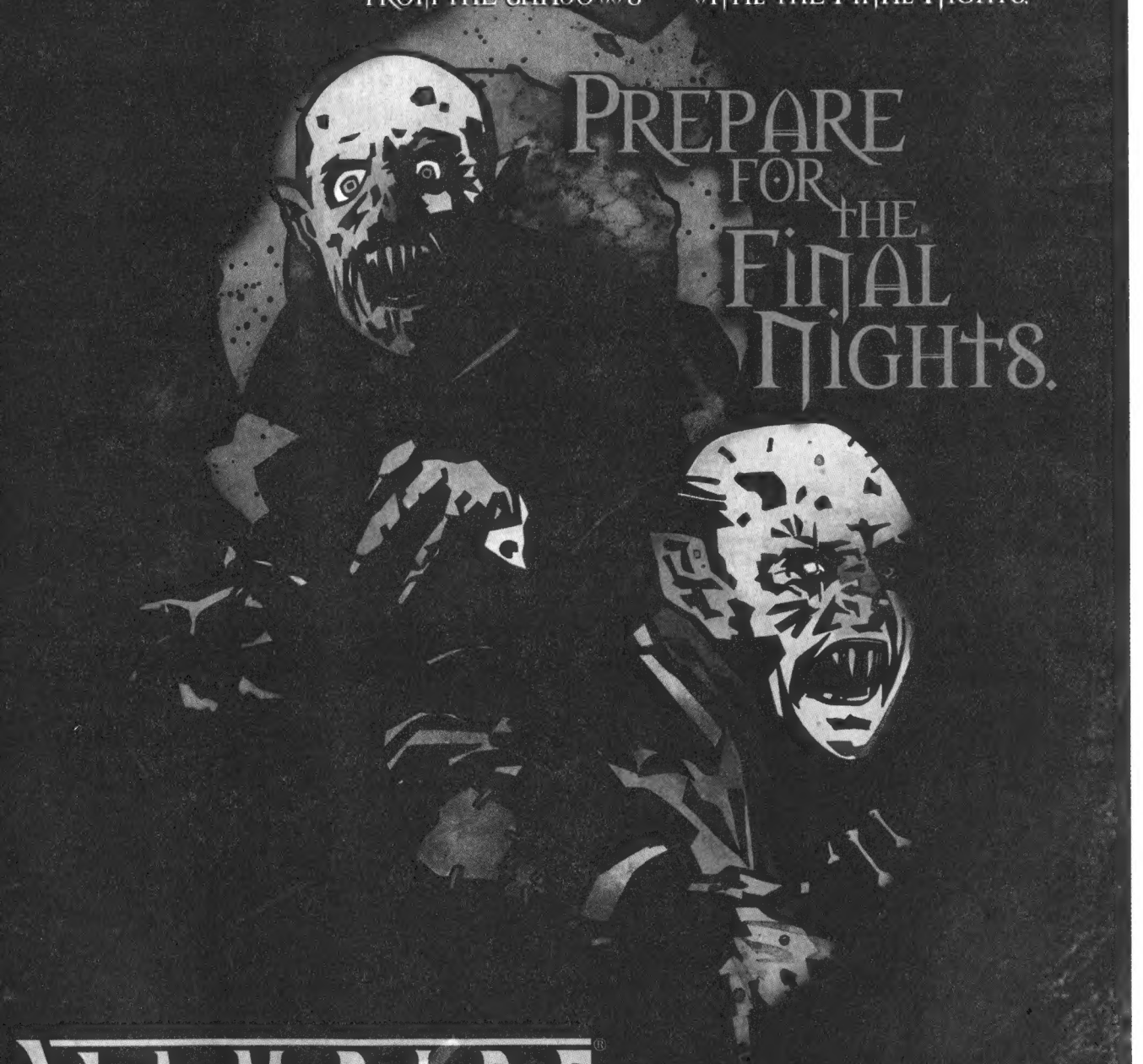

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Other Canadian team members are Nick Chen of West Hill, Ontario; S. Ryan Kirk from Regina, Saskatchewan; and Terry Tsang of Burnaby, British Columbia.

White Wolf turns to award-winning authors for *Wraith* fiction

White Wolf Game Studios has announced that Lucy Taylor, Matthew J. Costello, P.D. Cacek, and Tom Deitz have signed on to write introductory fiction pieces for upcoming releases in the company's *Wraith: The Oblivion* role-playing game.

Taylor and Costello's work appears in *Doomslayers: Into the Labyrinth,* a July release. Taylor won the Bram Stoker Award for her novel *The Safety of Unknown Cities.* Costello scripted the CD-ROM games *The 7th Guest* and *The 11th Hour,* was nominated for a Bram Stoker Award for his novel *Homecoming,* and *Science Fiction Chronicle* named his novel *Darkborn* one of the best novels of 1992.

Cacek and Deitz provided stories for *Renegades,* currently scheduled for October release. Cacek has won one Bram Stoker Award and has been nominated for another this year. Deitz' fantasy novels include *Windmaster's Bane* and *The Gryphon King.*

THUS CAINE — THE FIRST MAN BORN OF MAN —
SLEW HIS BROTHER, AND WAS CURSED WITH
IMMORTALITY AND A TERRIBLE LUST FOR BLOOD.

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Origins Awards presented at Origins '98

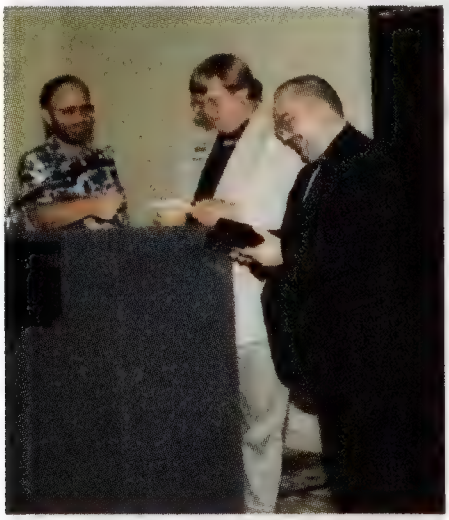
The Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts & Design presented the 1997 Origins Awards, the premier awards for design and production excellence in adventure games, at a ceremony held the evening of Friday, July 3, at the Origins Game Fair in Columbus, Ohio. The Academy also inducted eight classic games and game magazines into the Adventure Gaming Hall of Fame.

The Origins Awards are a 24-year tradition of the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts & Design. Each year, nominees are selected by the Academy membership, then voted on by the gaming public, using ballots published in many gaming magazines, and the Academy.

The winners of the 1997 Origins Awards are:

Best Abstract Board Game of 1997: *Kill Doctor Lucky* from Cheapass Games, designed by James Ernest.

Best Historical Board Game of 1997: *Successors* from The Avalon Hill Game Company, designed by Mark Simonitch and Richard Berg.



Artist Phil Foglio (center) and Wizards of the Coast's Peter Adkison (right) accept the award for ***RoboRally Grand Prix****. Frank Chadwick (left) presented the award.*

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Board Game of 1997: *RoboRally Grand Prix* from Wizards of the Coast, designed by Glenn Elliot, Adam Conus, and Tom Wylie.

Best Graphic Presentation of a Board Game of 1997

This year, the voting was tied. Awards went to:

Wadjet: A Family Adventure Game from Timbuk II, graphic design by Dee Pomerleau.

Successors from The Avalon Hill Game Company, graphic design by Kurt Miller.

Best Action Computer Game of 1997: *Tomb Raider* from Eidos Software.

Best Roleplaying Computer Game of 1997: *Final Fantasy VII* from Eidos Software.

Best Strategy Computer Game of 1997: *Sid Meier's Gettysburg* from Firaxis, designed by Sid Meier, Jeff Briggs, and Brian Reynolds.

Best Amateur Game Magazine of 1997: *Starry Wisdom* from Chaosium, edited by Dustin Wright, Eric Vogt, Shannon Appel, and Drashi Khendup.

Best Professional Game Magazine of 1997: *Knights of the Dinner Table* from Kenzer & Co., by Jolly Blackburn, Brian Jelke, Steve Johansson, and David Kenzer.

Best Trading Card Game of 1997: *Shadowrun Trading Card Game Limited Edition* from FASA, designed by Mike Nielsen, Jim Nelson, and Mike Mulvihill.

Best Traditional Card Game of 1997: *Give Me the Brain* from Cheapass Games, designed by James Ernest.

Best Card Game Expansion or Supplement of 1997: *Legend of the Five Rings: Time of the Void* from Five Rings Publishing, designed by Dave Williams.

Best Graphic Presentation of a Card Game of 1997: *Shadowrun Trading Card Game Limited Edition* from FASA, graphic design by Jim Nelson and Mike Nielsen.

Best Game-Related Novel of 1997: *Planar Powers* from TSR, written by J. Robert King.

Best Game-Related Short Work of 1997: *A Forty Share in Innsmouth* from Chaosium, written by C.J. Henderson.

Best Roleplaying Adventure of 1997: *Independence Day* for *Deadlands* from Pinnacle Entertainment Group, designed by Chris Snyder and Matt Forbeck.

Best Roleplaying Supplement of 1997: *Delta Green* for *Call of Cthulhu* from Pagan Publishing, designed by Dennis Detwiller, Adam Scott Glacy, and John Tynes.

Best Roleplaying Game of 1997: *Legend of the Five Rings Roleplaying Game* from Alderac Entertainment Group, designed by John Wick.

Best Graphic Presentation of a Roleplaying Game, Adventure, or Supplement of 1997: *In Nomine* from Steve Jackson Games, graphic design by Jeff Koke, Derek Pearcy, and Dan Smith.

Best Historical Figure Miniatures Series of 1997: Charlie Company U.S. Army Figures from RAFM, designed by Bob Murch.

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Figure Miniature of 1997: Sisters of Battle Battle Squad (Seraphin) from Games Workshop, designed by Jes Goodwin.

Best Vehicular Miniature of 1997: Call of Cthulhu Roadster from RAFM, designed by Bob Murch.

Best Historical Miniature Rules of 1997: *Flint & Steel* from Clash of Arms Games, designed by Richard Kane.

Best Science Fiction or Fantasy Miniatures Rules of 1997: *Deadlands: The Great Rail Wars* from Pinnacle Entertainment Group, designed by Shane Lacy Hensley.

Best New Play-by-Mail Game of 1997: *Middle-earth PBM Fourth Age Circa 1000* from Game Systems, designed by William B. Field Jr. and Peter G. Stassun.

Best Ongoing Play-by-Mail Game of 1997: *Star Web* from Flying Buffalo, designed by Rick Loomis.

1998 Inductees to the Adventure Gaming Hall of Fame:

BattleTech Mechs and Vehicles miniatures line from Ral Partha, developed by Charles Crain.

Berg's Review of Games published by Richard Berg.

The Courier from Courier Publications, published by Dick Bryant.

Fire & Maneuver from Baron Publishing, Diverse Talents, and Steve Jackson Games.

Illuminati Play-by-Mail from Adventure Systems and Flying Buffalo, designed by Draper Kauffman.

Middle-earth Play-by-Mail from Game Systems, designed by William B. Field Jr. and Peter G. Stassun.

Nuclear War from Flying Buffalo, designed by Douglas Malewicki.

Strategy & Tactics from SPI, 3W, and Decision Games.

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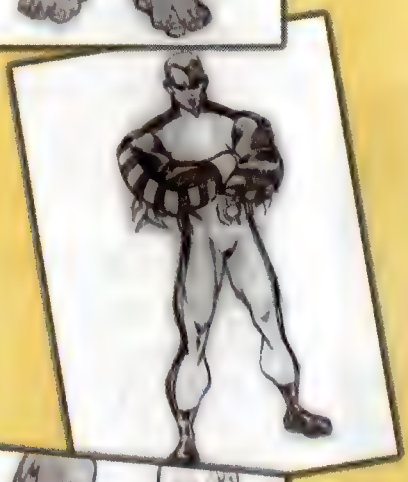

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Sneak a peek at: *Battleground* miniatures

25mm figures for White Wolf's *Trinity: Battleground* miniatures wargame, scheduled for August release. Miniatures designed by Bob Naismith.

Reviewed by Joyce Greenholdt

From the left: Aberrant figures and their support troops are cast in green plastic; two Psion support troops are grey. Figures are shown approximately actual size.

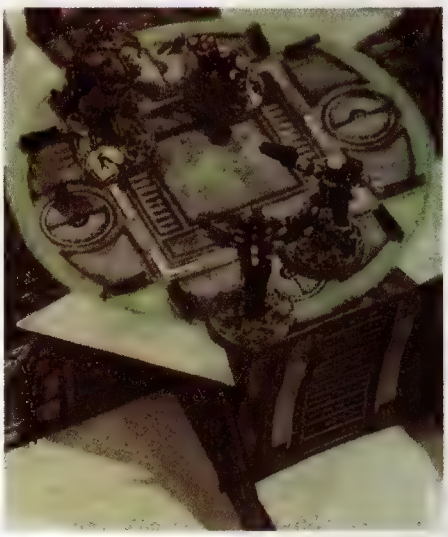
Trinity: Battleground covers the struggle between the power-mad, mutated Aberrants and the human psions of the Seventh Legion for control of a once-peaceful colony world. According to White Wolf, future releases will include blister-packed pewter miniatures as well as game supplements which will cover new Psi orders and enemy races or groups — and new locations in which to do battle.

The *Battleground* boxed game uses the science-fiction setting of the *Trinity* storytelling game, so the figures can be used with the role-playing game as well as the wargame. *Battleground* takes a small-scale approach, so each figure moves and acts as an individual, rather than being part of a formation of figures. This also let White Wolf sculpt a wide variety of different "character" figures in addition to the identical support troops.

Unlike most miniatures manufacturers, White Wolf is casting its figures in plastic, rather than metal. Traditionally, metal figures have been both more detailed and more expensive than plastic. White Wolf has worked with Fortress Figures to refine Fortress' high-definition plastic casting process to come up with plastic-resin figures that can compare with metal for quality. On the whole, they've succeeded.

The plastic used for the 20 figures included in the *Battleground* boxed set is somewhat flexible and soft enough that it's easy to trim off flash with a hobby knife — much easier than with a metal figure. However, most of these plastic figures have more flash than a comparable metal miniature, as you can see in the accompanying photo. Mold lines are, if anything, less of a problem with these figures, and an emery board (the cheap kind you can buy in a grocery or drug store for fingernails) works well in place of a file for getting rid of them: It smoothes the plastic, whereas a file tends to leave distinct marks.

The only casting flaws that occur more frequently in the plastic figures than you'd expect in metal are small pits caused by air bubbles that were trapped between the mold and the plastic. Most are mere pinpricks, almost certain to disappear when the figures are sprayed with primer, but some are large enough that you'd probably want to either fill them or incorporate them into the figure somehow — as dents in body armor, for instance.



Painted figures duke it out atop one of the cardstock buildings from the basic game at White Wolf's Origins booth.

Incidentally, plastic figures *do* need to be washed before you prime them — warm water and dish soap will do nicely — otherwise, chemicals used in the molding process may make it difficult for paint to stick to the plastic. Cleaned figures took a coat of primer well.

As for the sculpting quality, the human models are well-proportioned, with well-defined facial features and good detail in clothing and weaponry. Also, they were cast in grey plastic, while the Aberrants are green, so you could play a game right out of the box and still be able to tell the sides apart. (Though, as all hardcore figure painters know, the painted ones fight better.) Aberrant figures are suitably oozy, scaly, and/or spiky-looking. Poses for figures on both sides convey action without unbalancing the figures.

The *Trinity: Battleground* box contains, in addition to the complete rules, counters and other paper stuff needed to play, 20 plastic figures, 10 dice, two hills for battlefield terrain, and four sheets of cardboard buildings, walls, and fuel tanks to spice up your battlefield. Its price tag of $59.95 is not unreasonable, considering the extras and the quality of the miniatures.

Prices for the metal blister packs, which range from $5.95 to $12.95, depending on the number of figures included, are comparatively steep on a per-figure basis, but each package also includes new counters, weapons rules, and character information for new figures, so some are almost a mini-supplement on their own. Also, you don't need to have a whole lot of figures for a game.

Still, you'll probably want to try out a game or two, just to make sure you enjoy this system before you spring for your own boxed set. Look for demo games at this summer's conventions and look for a review of the full game in the next issue of *GameTime*.

Two Psion figures as they appear before excess plastic is trimmed away.

Aberrant support units cross one of the hills included in the boxed game. Ugly little spuds, ain't they?

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Lord of the Fries

Card game from Cheapass Games.
Cost: $5.
Number of players: Two to six.
Designed for ages: Junior-high to adult with caveat below.
Game length: About 10 minutes per hand.
Learning curve: Rules take less than a couple of minutes to explain, and there is seldom any need to reference them during play.
Ease of play: Easy.
Strife factor: Low. Other than passing high-point cards to one's opponents, there aren't many ways to make emotions run high.

Reviewed by Brent Frankenhoff

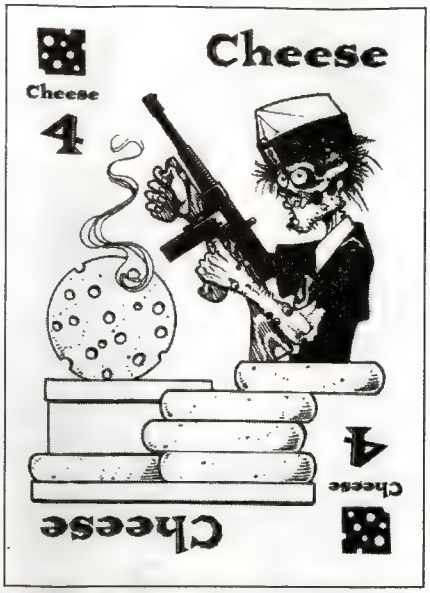
Lord of the Fries is the one of the latest games from the aptly, if vulgarly, named Cheapass Games. It also won an Origins Award at this year's Origins Game Fair in Columbus, Ohio. Packaged in a simple white envelope, the game's components consist of 66 cards printed on heavy orange uncoated stock (which can be difficult to shuffle) and a four-page rules/play reference sheet. Players are required to provide a six-sided die, which Cheapass figures everyone has lying around the house.

All the cards are dealt to the players at the beginning of the game. Each card represents part of a meal: cow meat, bun, fries, and so on, and is worth a certain number of points. Players assume the role of zombie workers at a fast-food restaurant, and the goal is to get rid of all the cards in your hand by assembling them in the right combinations to fill customer orders.

The composition of the meals is first determined by rolling the die to get a random menu selection. After the die-rolling player determines the meal, play passes clockwise; each player in turn must either fill the order or pass a card to the player who rolled the die. Whoever fills the order gets control and can roll the die for another menu selection or choose one from the menu.

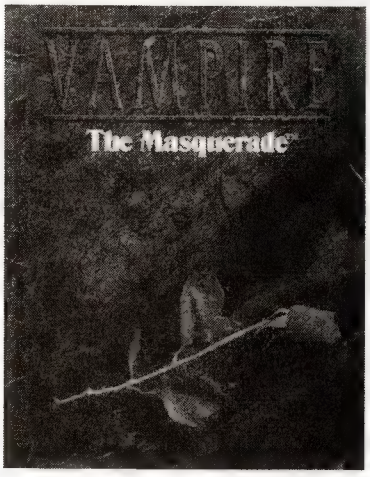
Most of the meals have such offbeat names as "Chickacheezabunga" (requiring a Bird, a Cheese, and a Bun card to fill) or "Old Man and the Sea" (a Fish and three Drinks).

This is an ideal game for the junior-high crowd, since it will produce giggles based on the game concept, the art, and the meal names. Unfortunately, Cheapass' own name may work against it, since parents may not want their children playing a game, even one as inexpensive and fun as this, from a company with such a moniker. And some art may upset younger players (or their parents — think PG or PG-13), so it might be a good idea not to involve the *Old Maid* set in this one.



The only other problem encountered (and it's a minor one) was that the Fries cards and the Fish cards appear similar and could get confused in the heat of play. An icon with the fries standing straight up in their box, rather than one in which they look like tentacles (similar to the Fish card, with its octopus logo), would have helped alleviate this.

Cheapass definitely has the right philosophy in packaging its products, and it's obvious from the rulebook that the designers had a highly developed sense of humor. After all, what other game can claim to have had "help from a freezer full of overworked and blood-shot undead snarling Berry-Pie gobbling guinea pigs"?



Vampire: The Masquerade
Newly Revised Edition

Role-playing game from White Wolf Publishing.
Cost: $29.95
Number of players: Two or more.
Designed for ages: Unspecified, but the game is aimed at an older, more mature audience.
Game length: A single session is likely to take several hours.
Learning curve: Basics can be picked up over the course of a single session; mastering the system will take a significant investment of time.
Ease of play: Most of the time, play progresses smoothly, but players without photographic memories will probably still have to look up specific rules from time to time.
Strife factor: Ideally, player characters work together to achieve a common goal. Conflicting character goals or immature behavior by players are the leading cause of strife.

Reviewed by Joyce Greenholdt

The newest edition of *Vampire: The Masquerade,* which is currently scheduled for release in October, has added more than 30 pages to the hardcover volume, while increasing the price by only $1.95.

This edition will contain all-new fiction and interior art, and comics fans will note some familiar names among the art credits, including John Bolton, Guy Davis, Vince Locke, Bill Sienkiewicz, and Kent Williams. In fact, White Wolf plans to release a special limited edition of the book, with a silver-embossed black leatherette cover, slipcased with another volume reprinting the new art and some of the "classic" art from the second edition. The art book will have an introduction by Neil Gaiman, and the package will retail for $69.95.

Looking at the game rules in the new edition, there don't appear to be major changes. There's a fair bit of new information, including some additional Disciplines (vampiric powers, for the uninitiated), and the character sheet has been redesigned. An appendix now contains some advanced concepts, which the game referee (called The Storyteller in this system) may choose whether to use in a campaign. These include Merits and Flaws (character advantages, like being lucky, and disadvantages, like being nearsighted) previously included in one of the game's supplements. The appendix also has a bestiary (alligator to wolf) for those occasions when the players get a little closer to nature than the average urban predator cares for.

The rules are much better organized this time around, so, once the index is complete, it should be much easier to look things up quickly during a game. This alone may make it a worthwhile purchase for people who already have the second-edition rules, and newcomers to the game will find it easier to get the hang of things with the new edition.

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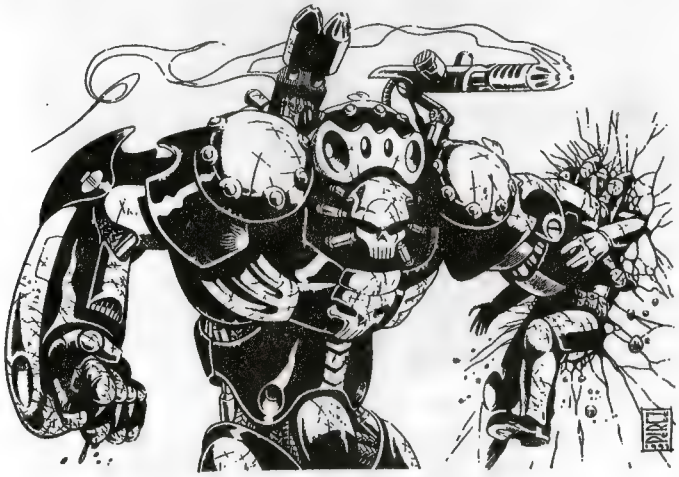

Rifts® is science fiction

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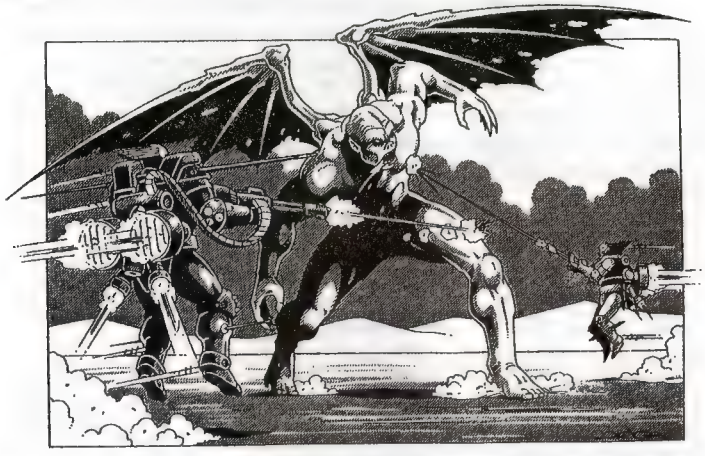

Rifts® is fantasy

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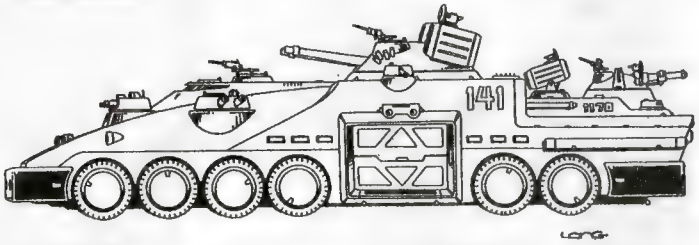
Rifts® is horror

Where ley lines meet, they are called junctions or "nexus" points. These are the places where portals or "Rifts" tear open the fabric of space and time. Sometimes the Rifts can be controlled, but all too often they tear open like an erupting volcano of mystic and psychic energy. From the eruption, hordes of creatures emerge. Some are monstrous flesh and blood creatures, others are alien intelligences, but the worst are supernatural beings that even future man calls *demons*.



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Rifts® is great artwork

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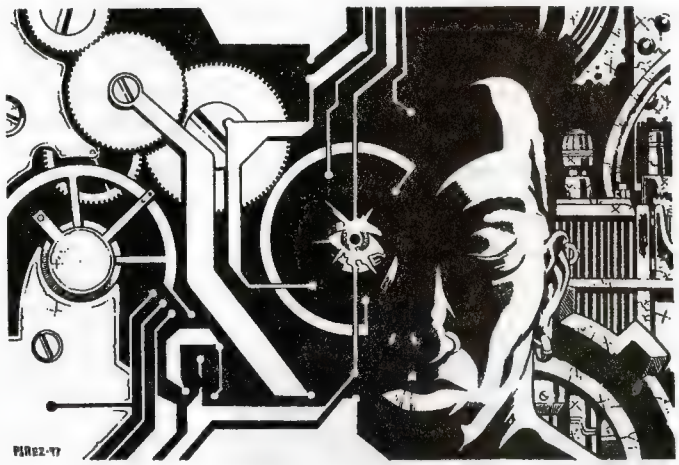

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C•23

Trading-card game from Wizards of the Coast.

Cost: $5.99 for 40-card starter decks; $2.49 for 12-card booster packs.

Number of Players: Two or more.

Designed for ages: Designed for new players.

Game length: 10 minutes per hand.

Learning curve: Rules are easy and quick to learn.

Ease of play: Minimal strategy is required, making each hand move quickly.

Strife factor: Paybacks occur frequently, especially in the two-player game.

Reviewed by Brent Frankenhoff

C•23 is the first trading-card game using Wizards of the Coast's new Arc System rules, a simplified version of its Deckmaster System used for *Magic: The Gathering*. Other Arc System trading-card games include one based on *Xena: Warrior Princess* and another based on *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*. According to Wizards of the Coast, the various Arc System games' cards can be played against one another.

In addition to the trading-card game, *C•23* has a companion comic-book series from Image and was developed in conjunction with Jim Lee's Wildstorm Productions. As characters are introduced in future expansion sets, they will also be introduced in the comic book.

The story behind *C•23* is a simple one, with a group of rebels battling against an alien invasion. The game is also simple, with the goal being to run your opponent(s) out of cards. Each attack can force an opponent to discard a certain number of cards, and deck size is limited to 40 cards.

The cards themselves are nothing special, with art that appears to have been taken directly from the comic book and shrunk to fit on the card, a process that makes the card art look cheap in comparison to the images that have graced *Magic* cards and other existing trading-card games.

The rules take about 10 minutes to learn and only require an occasional reference to resolve conflicts during the game. After playing a number of hands, it seemed that whichever player attacked first usually won the hand; a victorious comeback was nearly impossible. Players may be able to remedy this situation by customizing their decks, adding cards beyond what are included in a typical starter deck.

The game is simple to learn and could provide a good starting point from which to introduce a newcomer to trading-card games before going on to the more intricate world of *Magic*.

While novice gamers and fans of *Xena* and *Hercules* fans may find the Arc System a lot of fun, more experienced trading-card game players will probably find the system lacking when it comes to continued replays. We tired of it after about an hour.

Monsters Ravage America

Board game from The Avalon Hill Game Company.

Cost: $39.95

Number of Players: Two to four, with special rules for solitaire play.

Game Length: One to two hours.

Learning Curve: Quick. One game allows players to learn the basic strategies.

Ease of Play: Large hexes and clearly delineated terrain aid in speeding play, but the map is cluttered, and some site designations are hard to decipher. This is especially true of the monster lairs.

Strife Factor: Low. The rule book is clearly written and only 16 pages long. Some set-up rules could be clearer, although they are spelled out in the rules.

Reviewed by Mike Greenholdt

The basic premise of *Monsters Ravage America* is that monster-movie monsters (thinly disguised Kong, Godzilla, Mothra, *etc.*) are attacking the good ol' U.S. of A. Each player controls one of the monsters and one branch of the American military. The monsters' aim is to trash cities, building up those monsters' strength, until a set number of cities, dependent on the number of players, have been stomped. The monsters then fight it out to see who is king (or queen) of the monsters.

The players' control over the attacking monsters and the defending military works surprisingly well. It may be cynical to suppose that various branches of the U.S. Armed Forces would not cooperate even when 100-foot-tall monsters are destroying cities, but, as a game mechanic, it makes for an interesting situation. Players' military branches will cooperate in areas where someone else's monster is stomping, at the same time they are maneuvering their own monsters to attack other cities. And everyone makes use of the National Guard.

The advanced game introduces rules for scientific research, mutations of the monsters, and monsters controlled by the military, all solid staples of the monster movie. The advanced rules can greatly change the strategy of the game.

Game components are a mix of counters and plastic pieces, with the cardboard monsters towering above the map, inserted into stands. The map is colorful, if a bit busy, and most of the geography is correct, save for a major diversion of the Mississippi River. Each of the military branches has its own bases on the map.

The game is a good simulation of the average '50s and '60s monster-movie plot, although, in the basic game, the humans cannot win. This may lead you to believe that this is just another beer-and-pretzels game, but this is not entirely the case. *Monsters Ravage America* is also a pretty good entry-level wargame. It introduces the novice player to hex movement, basic strategy, production, and military nomenclature, in a package that almost any science-fiction buff can relate to. Painless learning, as it were.

That being said, the $40 price tag is steep for a fairly simple game, good production values or not. Unless you're a movie buff or have a younger friend you want to introduce to gaming, the price will probably be too high. One niche this game fills well is that of the party game for gamers. Even non-gamers will enjoy this game.

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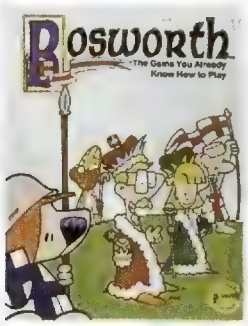


Bosworth

Board game from Out of the Box Games.

Cost: $19.95

Number of Players: Two to four.

Designed for ages: 8 to adult.

Game Length: 20 to 60 minutes.

Learning Curve: Very quick, if you play chess; otherwise, moderate.

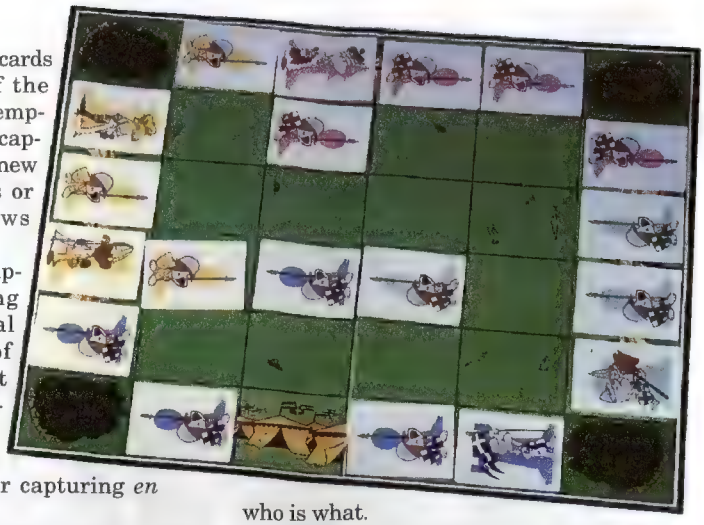
Ease of Play: Very simple, especially if you have played chess.

Strife Factor: Almost none.

Reviewed by Mike Greenholdt

Bosworth is the name of the field in which the final battle of the Wars of the Roses took place. What this has to do with a chess-variant game, I'm not sure. The creators did include a splendid one-sheet write-up of the event (the battle, not the game).

Bosworth the chess variant is an interesting strategy game. The board is a six-by-six grid with the corners blocked off, and up to four players may compete. Each player begins with four pawns in his or her starting field. The chess pieces are represented by cards, since players each keep a concealed hand of four cards during the course of the game. As spaces are emptied by movement or capture, the player places new chess pieces from his or her hand, then draws back up to four cards.



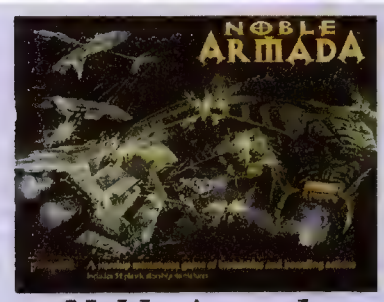
The object is to capture all the opposing kings. All the normal movement rules of chess apply, save that pawns may move toward any opponent's starting field and there is no castling or capturing *en passant*.

While *Bosworth* uses normal chess moves, the strategies are far from chess-like. Usually, players have far fewer pieces and fewer options on the board, especially in a four-person game. Keeping your king off the board as long as possible seems to be the best strategy.

The board is mounted on heavy-duty cardboard and is laminated. The card and board art is by John Kovalic, using characters from his *Dork Tower* comic strip as chessmen. There are silhouettes of the appropriate chess pieces behind the cartoon characters, so you don't have to remember who is what.

This is an amusing, if not compelling, game. Some gamers might be put off by the lack of randomness in "combat resolution." (That's why we abandoned chess for wargaming in the first place, isn't it?) A game of *Bosworth* gets serious quickly, if the player wants to survive, since you need a chess-game intensity to do well.

Gamers who gravitate to little or no luck games, such as *Diplomacy*, should like this game. At $19.95, this is a very affordable addition to a collection, and I would recommend it to serious gamers who want to tune their talents in board games.



Noble Armada

Starship miniatures game from Holistic Design.

Cost: $55.

Number of players: Two or more.

Game length: Varies with size of battle.

Learning curve: Rules are medium-high complexity; the basics aren't difficult to pick up, but learning strategies for various ships will take several games.

Ease of play: Again, basics are picked up quickly; tricky maneuvers and strategies will slow a game down.

Strife factor: Low, provided players follow the sequence of play carefully and don't take actions out of turn.

Reviewed by Joyce Greenholdt

Noble Armada is set in Holistic's *Fading Suns* role-playing universe, a dark future when spacefaring technology is waning, making spaceships too valuable to destroy. Instead, the noble houses which rule use broadsides and boarding actions to cripple and seize enemy ships.

The game comes with 32 plastic starships (four each of nine different designs). The box also contains Ship Display sheets for 30 different vessels, not just for the figures included in the box; a more extensive line of pewter miniatures is already in the works. Maps showing interior deck plans for two ships can be used with 25mm to 28mm figures to play out boarding actions (and can be used with the role-playing game, as well). Naturally, the *Noble Armada* box also contains the hex maps, rules, charts, and counters needed to play.

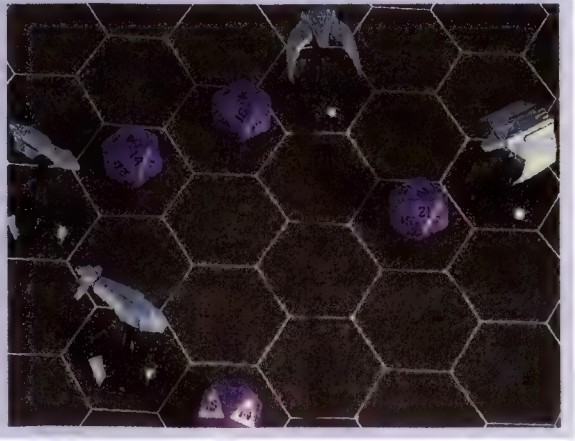
It also comes with four 20-sided dice — though you'll want to have more when you play. Dice serve as markers to indicate a ship's speed and direction of travel (which may differ from the direction it's facing), so you'll need at least one for each ship in use, plus more for actually rolling.

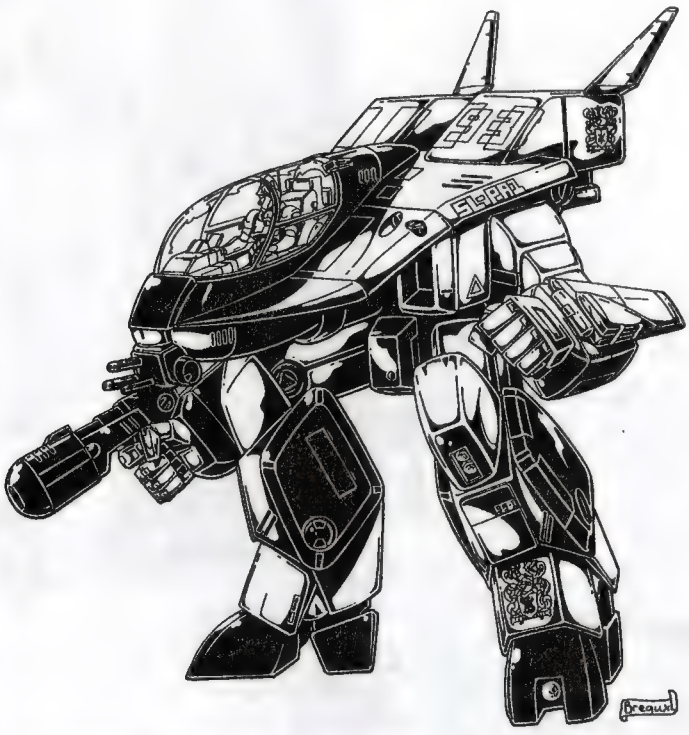
At range, ships try to overwhelm or burn out an opponent's shields by simultaneously firing as many weapons as they can on a single target. The Ship Display sheets show each weapon's arc of fire; you'll frequently see ships zigzagging across the map, trying to bring all their weapons to bear over the course of a single turn.

Once ships get in close, they can fire their grappling guns and send over boarding parties. A riskier close-range tactic is ramming. The wisdom of shooting it out at range or running in quickly to board depends on the relative sizes and strengths of the ships involved. Smaller ships are faster and more maneuverable; larger ships have more and better firepower.

An interesting feature of the combat system is that the base chance to hit an enemy vessel depends on the quality of your ship's crew; the more experienced your crew, the easier the vessel is to hit. Whether those hits do any damage is another question. With each die rolled, there is also the chance of a critical hit on the enemy ship or a critical failure in one of your weapons (ouch!). It's possible, though unlikely, to do more damage to your own ships than your opponent does over the course of a game.

There's more to keep track of in a starship combat game than there is in most other types of miniatures games; hence, the Ship Display sheets that let you keep track of your defences, see what weapons are functioning, check whether that engine hit is going to cost you speed, and so forth. But, as starship games go, *Noble Armada* makes such tracking easier than many games, letting you spend more time concentrating on how you're going to wipe out the other guy's ships.





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One more world in the Palladium Megaverse®

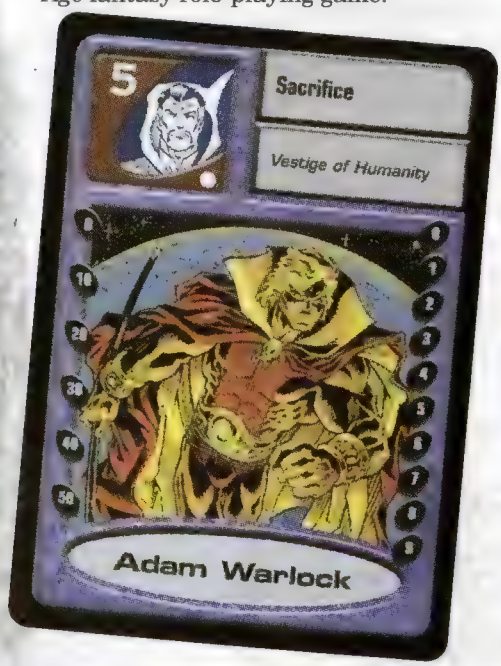
TSR deals Marvel heroes a new hand

By Joyce Greenholdt

Playing a super-hero role-playing game is like watching a movie and acting in it at the same time. You get to decide what your character will do and say in response to any situation, and the choices you and your fellow "actors" make will help determine whether the story ends in triumph or tragedy — but you won't know which until you get there. One person acts as a referee, setting up the plot and taking on the roles of the villains and supporting cast. A random element adds an element of suspense when you choose a risky course of action.

Super-hero role-playing games have been around almost as long as the role-playing hobby itself. In the mid-'80s, TSR, the company which had led role-playing games to massive popularity with *Dungeons & Dragons*, decided to branch out into the super-hero genre with a licensed game based on Marvel Comics characters. The game still has its fans today, even though it's been out of print for several years.

Now TSR has decided that the time is right to make a super-hero comeback this summer. But the new *Marvel Super Heroes Adventure Game* uses a completely different set of rules from the original game. Instead, TSR turned to its Saga rules system, originally used for the *Dragonlance: Fifth Age* fantasy role-playing game.



The Saga system was designed to keep games moving quickly and smoothly. It uses a special deck of cards (rather than dice) as its random element, which accomplishes two things: It allows for a certain amount of strategy, since players choose which of the cards they've been randomly dealt to use at any given time. And it allows the use of such card-game conventions as trump suits, which are more likely to be familiar to a role-playing novice than

the idea of rolling oddly shaped dice and consulting charts.

"The decision to use the Saga Game Rules was made jointly by Marvel and TSR," said the game's co-designer, Steven "Stan!" Brown. "In the earliest stages of the project, the design team visited the Marvel offices to discuss the possibilities, and there were quite a few ideas thrown around. Serious consideration was given to using or updating the rules from the original *Marvel Super Heroes* game, but in the end everyone agreed that the Saga rules were the way to go.

"We all loved (and still do) the original Marvel game, but Saga offered opportunities that we wanted to explore. We wanted the new *Marvel Super Heroes Adventure Game* to be a game that all Marvel comics fans will love to play. That meant that it had to be easy enough to appeal to a person who has never seen a role-playing game before, yet refined enough to grab the interest of a veteran gamer, plus it had to capture the essence of the entire Marvel Universe.

"The Saga rules were designed especially to capture the flavor of a pre-existing fictional setting, and we all agreed that the game had to 'feel like Marvel.' As a bonus, the Fate Deck features gorgeous, full-color art by the best Marvel artists, making it something every comic-book fan will want to own. Of course, the fact that the *Dragonlance: Fifth Age* game had just won the Games 100 Award for Best Adventure Game of 1996 didn't hurt Saga's cause, either."

Keeping things simple is the way the Saga rules keep a game moving quickly. Unlike most role-playing games, in which a character's physical and mental attributes are defined by number ratings in anywhere from six or nine or even more categories, *Marvel Super Hero* players only have to keep track of four areas: strength, agility, intellect, and willpower. Each one is associated with a different Marvel hero (Hulk, Spider-Man, Mr. Fantastic, and Dr. Strange, respectively), and these form four of the five card suits in the 96-card Fate Deck.

Every skill, power, or piece of equipment that your hero has is linked to one of these four attributes. When you want your hero to do something in the game, the referee (called the Narrator in this system) assigns it a difficulty rating — anywhere from 0 (automatic success) to 40 (a godlike feat).

For instance, say your hero needs to break through a locked, reinforced door to rescue a kidnapping victim, and the Narrator decides that's a feat

(Continues on Page 18)

1:42 PM
mom calls

1:43 PM
fellow player with Deep Space Nine
spoiler calls on line 2

5:17 PM
call 1 800 ROSES NOW

STAR TREK
CUSTOMIZABLE CARD GAME

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From Page 16

strength with a difficulty of 16. u'd start with your hero's strength ing (let's say it's a four), then play e of your cards, trying to beat the rget number of 16. But wait! The rds only go up to 9 in value (except one 10 card). One card just won't it. Here's where the strategy comes

There are two ways you can play ditional cards to raise your total re. First, play a trump card — in s case, a card in the strength (Hulk) t — and you get to draw a card from deck and add that, as well. If that d's a trump, too, you keep on draw-. Second, each hero has an Edge ing. If you play a card with a value er than your hero's Edge, you get to y another from your hand. Once u play a card that's higher than your

ge, you stop (unless, of course, it's a mp card). With luck and careful d management, your hero can per-m amazing feats.

Injuries to your hero will reduce the mber of cards in your hand, until hero gets a chance to recover. Most the time, heroes will "get their sec-d wind" by the end of a fight, but se-us injuries take time to heal. Killing haracter in this game requires a de-erate action taken against a help-s character, so it's less likely to hap-n to your hero in this system — ough not impossible.

The cards also serve as a tool for Narrator to keep the game moving. ch card is has a color code indicat-positive, negative, or neutral, as

Beware the power of Doom! The only 10 card in the game, playing Doctor Doom may bring you success in the short term — but he'll come back to haunt you. When you play any card in the Doom suit, the Narrator keeps it to influence later events in the game. And all Doom cards must be used by the end of the game, so do not think you can delay your fate for long.

well as a pair of one- or two-word phrases describing an action, event, or attitude. The Narrator can draw a card at random to determine the outcome of some action or another character's reaction to your hero — or get a quick inspiration for what happens next when he or she is stuck. "Police Sirens," for example, could lead to all sorts of things.

The game includes write-ups for many Marvel super-heroes (with more on the way in future supplements), or players can make their own. There is also a chapter with guidelines for converting characters from the original *Marvel Super Heroes* game and TSR's *Marvel Super Dice* game, as well as using Toy Biz action figures to help illustrate the action.

While there are sections which could be better organized, the rules are well-written, with a light, often humorous (check out the random superhero name generation table) tone that makes them more enjoyable to read. With an index to help players look up things quickly when a game is in progress, *Marvel Super Heroes* gives players all the help they should need to keep their games moving.

"Early on, I decided that the Marvel game would play like a comic book — not slow and intricate, like some other games, but slam-bang and blisteringly fast," said Mike Selinker, the game's lead designer. "I wanted it to be exhausting and exhilarating to play. And with cards flying a mile a minute and people shouting out their heroes' actions, we definitely got that.

"At this summer's Origins convention, I had the most surreal experience of my professional career. I sat down to play with seven players in extremely lifelike X-Men costumes — *so* lifelike that Wolverine's claws extended and retracted automatically. So there I was, playing The X-Men with The X-Men who had X-Men cards in front of them. And a little part of me said, 'Man, I've got a great job.'"

Buyer's Guide

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OPEN QUALIFIERS

July 5
Origins '98
Greater Columbus Convention Center
Columbus, OH

August 9
Gencon
Wisconsin Center
Milwaukee, WI

August 16
San Diego Comicon
San Diego Convention Center
San Diego, CA

September 6
Dragon Con
Atlanta Apparel Mart
Atlanta, GA

Date TBA
Euro Gencon
United Kingdom

Date TBA
Location TBA
Las Vegas, NV

Date TBA
Location TBA
Norfolk, VA

Date TBA
Location TBA
Netherlands

REGIONAL QUALIFIERS

May 23
Miscon Doubletree Edgewater
Missoula, MT

May 30
Lion And Unicorn
Birmingham, AL

June 6
Waterford West State School
Waterford West, Queensland,
Australia

June 14
Le Tog
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

June 20
Fantasy Shop
St. Charles, MO

June 20
Mayhem Collectibles
Clive, IA

June 20
Neutral Ground
New York, NY

June 27
Neutral Ground
Mountain View, CA

July 5
Star Hotel
Genova, Italy

July 11
Book Browser
Houston, TX

July 11
Hilton Suites
Brentwood, Tennessee

July 11
Sci-Fi City
Orlando, FL

July 11
Rochester Institute Of Technology
Rochester, NY

July 11
Newgate Mall Community Room
Ogden, UT

June 13
Jugendherberge Esslingen
Esslingen , Germany

July 18
Attactix
Aurora, CO

July 19
Renfrew Park Community Centre
Vancouver (Burnaby), BC

July 19
Sci Fi World
Concord, Ontario, Canada

July 19
Buurthuis T'terphoes
Enschede, Netherlands

July 25
Goleta Valley Community Center
Goleta, CA

July 25
Michigian State University
Union Building
East Lansing, MI

July 25
Source Comics&Games
Falcon Heights, MN

July 26
Mind Games City Store
Melbourne, Australia

August 8
Top Deck Games
Tulsa, OK

August 8
Chamberlain Elementary School
South Burlington, VT

August 22
Wizards Of The Coast
Game Center
Seattle, WA

August 22
Games Galore
Raleigh, NC

September 6
North Chicago City Building
North Chicago, IL

Date TBA
Location TBA
Sioux Falls, SD

Date TBA
Location TBA
London, England

Date TBA
Location TBA
Malmo, Sweden

Marvel Super Heroes
From Page 16

of strength with a difficulty of 16. You'd start with your hero's strength rating (let's say it's a four), then play one of your cards, trying to beat the target number of 16. But wait! The cards only go up to 9 in value (except for one 10 card). One card just won't cut it. Here's where the strategy comes in.

There are two ways you can play additional cards to raise your total score. First, play a trump card — in this case, a card in the strength (Hulk) suit — and you get to draw a card from the deck and add that, as well. If that card's a trump, too, you keep on drawing. Second, each hero has an Edge rating. If you play a card with a value lower than your hero's Edge, you get to play another from your hand. Once you play a card that's higher than your

Edge, you stop (unless, of course, it's a trump card). With luck and careful card management, your hero can perform amazing feats.

Injuries to your hero will reduce the number of cards in your hand, until the hero gets a chance to recover. Most of the time, heroes will "get their second wind" by the end of a fight, but serious injuries take time to heal. Killing a character in this game requires a deliberate action taken against a helpless character, so it's less likely to happen to your hero in this system — though not impossible.

The cards also serve as a tool for the Narrator to keep the game moving. Each card is has a color code indicating positive, negative, or neutral, as

Beware the power of Doom! The only 10 card in the game, playing Doctor Doom may bring you success in the short term — but he'll come back to haunt you. When you play any card in the Doom suit, the Narrator keeps it to influence later events in the game. And all Doom cards must be used by the end of the game, so do not think you can delay your fate for long.

well as a pair of one- or two-word phrases describing an action, event, or attitude. The Narrator can draw a card at random to determine the outcome of some action or another character's reaction to your hero — or get a quick inspiration for what happens next when he or she is stuck. "Police Sirens," for example, could lead to all sorts of things.

The game includes write-ups for many Marvel super-heroes (with more on the way in future supplements), or players can make their own. There is also a chapter with guidelines for converting characters from the original *Marvel Super Heroes* game and TSR's *Marvel Super Dice* game, as well as using Toy Biz action figures to help illustrate the action.

While there are sections which could be better organized, the rules are well-written, with a light, often humorous (check out the random superhero name generation table) tone that makes them more enjoyable to read. With an index to help players look up things quickly when a game is in progress, *Marvel Super Heroes* gives players all the help they should need to keep their games moving.

"Early on, I decided that the Marvel game would play like a comic book — not slow and intricate, like some other games, but slam-bang and blisteringly fast," said Mike Selinker, the game's lead designer. "I wanted it to be exhausting and exhilarating to play. And with cards flying a mile a minute and people shouting out their heroes' actions, we definitely got that.

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San Diego, CA

September 6
Dragon Con
Atlanta Apparel Mart
Atlanta, GA

Date TBA
Euro Gencon
United Kingdom

Date TBA
Location TBA
Las Vegas, NV

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Norfolk, VA

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Netherlands

REGIONAL QUALIFIERS

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Esslingen , Germany

July 18
Attactix
Aurora, CO

July 19
Renfrew Park Community Centre
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Sci Fi World
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July 19
Buurthuis T'terphoes
Enschede, Netherlands

July 25
Goleta Valley Community Center
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Michigian State University
Union Building
East Lansing, MI

July 25
Source Comics&Games
Falcon Heights, MN

July 26
Mind Games City Store
Melbourne, Australia

August 8
Top Deck Games
Tulsa, OK

August 8
Chamberlain Elementary School
South Burlington, VT

August 22
Wizards Of The Coast
Game Center
Seattle, WA

August 22
Games Galore
Raleigh, NC

September 6
North Chicago City Building
North Chicago, IL

Date TBA
Location TBA
Sioux Falls, SD

Date TBA
Location TBA
London, England

Date TBA
Location TBA
Malmo, Sweden

Clan War

Art by Carl Frank

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- Shugenja
- Yojimbo
- Courtiers
- Geisha
- Ogre Bushi
- Famous heroes of Rokugan

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GameTime

The Buyer's Guide to Role-Playing Games

Here are some of the major role-playing game releases currently scheduled for release from August through October. The release months listed are only tentative and subject to change, as are the manufacturers' suggested retail prices. At the end of all four *Buyer's Guide* sections, you'll find a list of everything featured in this issue of *GameTime,* which you can use to keep track of the games you're interested in. You can even take a copy to your local retailer with the games you want marked, so that he or she can order them for you as they become available.

Archangel

Dark Conspiracy 2nd Ed.:

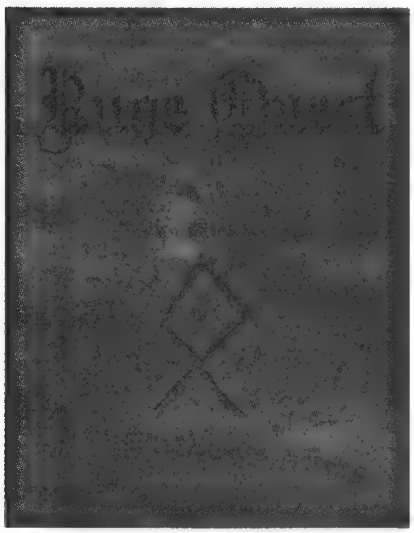
Referee's Screen, $20, Aug. A three-panel screen illustrated by Larry Elmore plus a 48-page booklet with material from the previously released "Ice Daemon" and "Nightsider" adventures for this science fiction/horror game.

Dark Rumors Vol. 1, $20, Sept. The 128-page book collects two adventures from the first edition of *Dark Conspiracy,* updated for the new edition. In "Among the Dead," characters must make a mystic trip to Moscow for the knowledge needed to save New Boswash before it succumbs to the grip of The Dark. In "Heart of Darkness," characters track a 1,000-year-old wizard and his magical talisman in hopes of putting an ancient evil to rest.

Atlas

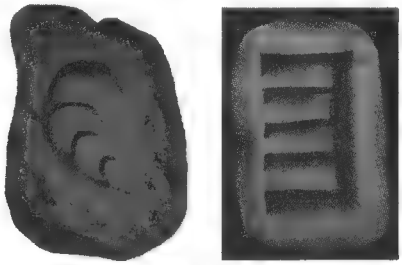
Ars Magica: *The Wizard's Grimoire Revised Ed.,* $22.95, Aug. New directions for magic in mythic Europe, the setting for *Ars Magica.* This 272-page volume includes new templates for player-character magi, information on topics of concern to the wizardly class, new options for faerie magic in line with the fourth edition's spell casting system, and more.

Avalon Hill



RuneQuest: Slayers:

RuneQuest: Slayers, Aug. The new incarnation of *RuneQuest* is a completely new game, according to Avalon Hill, with more intuitive and less number-intensive mechanics, but still with a fast, deadly combat system. *RuneQuest: Slayers* is about men and women determined to become legendary warriors. Though magic and runes are important, there are no wizards or sorcerers. Character creation takes just a few minutes, with the WarClan being an integral part of the game. A player's WarClan will provide access to certain runes but restrict the acquisition of others. Some WarClans are politically aligned, others are religion based, while others restrict membership to those of their own race. Many are bands of warriors who practice specific fighting styles.



Runes (left) and glyphs (right) play an important part in ***RuneQuest: Slayers.***

RuneQuest: Glyphs, summer. This game aid is a collection of 100 glyph pieces for all 10 WarClans.

WarClans: The Ancient and the Lost, late summer. This supplement details more obscure and exotic WarClans, such as non-human clans for elves and dwarves and the Clan of the Lost Kings, whose members are descendants of unrecorded royal bloodlines.

Adventures: Perils of the Rifts, winter. This supplement combines several scenarios set in the wilds of the Glacier Rifts. They can be played separately or as a linked campaign.

Black Dragon Press

Dragon Storm:

Necromancer's Manifesto, $13, Aug. The game master's guide to the bad guys of *Dragon Storm.* Includes a Twice Risen Necromancer card, printed on the back of the book.

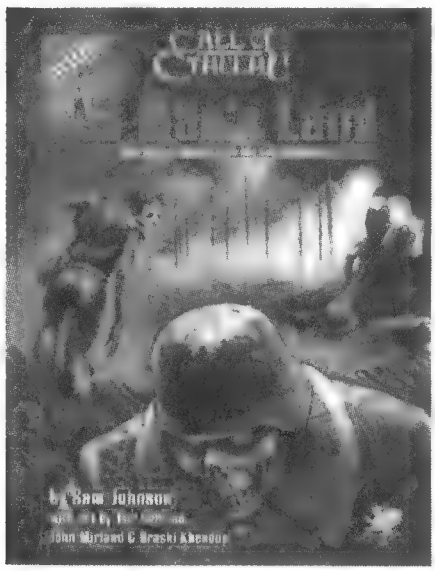
Player Card Set Two, $15, Sept. A set of 13 player cards. 11 are the same in every set; the remaining two will be randomly selected.

Chameleon Eclectic

Millennium's End: *Southeast Asia Sourcebook,* $18, Sept. This 144-page volume covers the people, attitudes, and customs of Southeast Asia circa 1999.

Chaosium

Call of Cthulhu:



No Man's Land, $14.95, Aug. The first published adventure from Chaosium's Gen Con Cthulhu Master's Tournament. The setting is World War I, the Ardennes Forest. Players are members of the famous Lost Battalion, confronted not only by German soldiers but also by the arcane forces of the Cthulhu mythos. Can your Browning automatic rifles defeat the zombie hordes? Comes with six pregenerated characters.

Before the Fall: Innsmouth Adventures Prior to the Great Raid of 1928, $11.95, Sept. Five adventures concerning the quaint hamlet of Innsmouth, Mass., where the fish in the harbor always seem to bite unusually well. For use as standalone adventures or for insertion into campaigns.

(Continues on Page 24)

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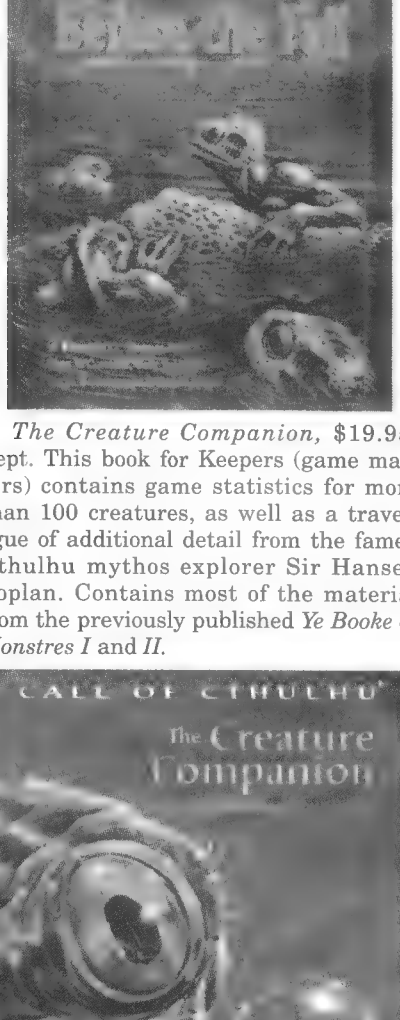
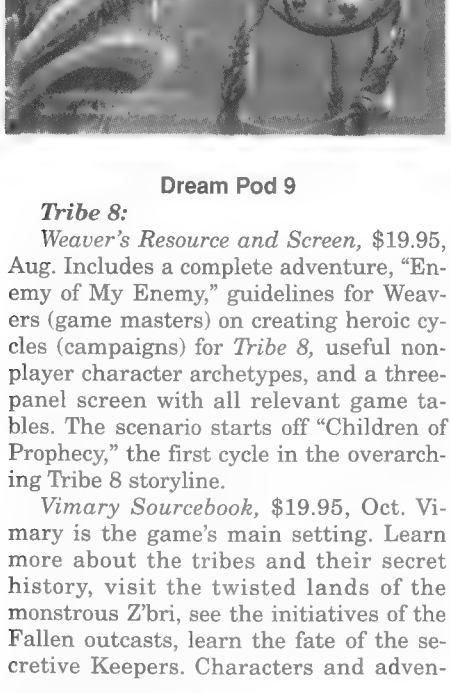
Role-Playing Games
From Page 22



The Creature Companion, $19.95, Sept. This book for Keepers (game masters) contains game statistics for more than 100 creatures, as well as a travelogue of additional detail from the famed Cthulhu mythos explorer Sir Hansen Poplan. Contains most of the material from the previously published *Ye Booke of Monstres I* and *II.*



Dream Pod 9

Tribe 8:

Weaver's Resource and Screen, $19.95, Aug. Includes a complete adventure, "Enemy of My Enemy," guidelines for Weavers (game masters) on creating heroic cycles (campaigns) for *Tribe 8,* useful nonplayer character archetypes, and a three-panel screen with all relevant game tables. The scenario starts off "Children of Prophecy," the first cycle in the overarching Tribe 8 storyline.

Vimary Sourcebook, $19.95, Oct. Vimary is the game's main setting. Learn more about the tribes and their secret history, visit the twisted lands of the monstrous Z'bri, see the initiatives of the Fallen outcasts, learn the fate of the secretive Keepers. Characters and adventure resources to help Weavers.

Eden Studios

Conspiracy X:

Exodus: The Saurian Sourcebook, $18, late July. Scheduled for release just prior to Gen Con, *Exodus* completes the trilogy of sourcebooks on the alien races begun with *Nemesis* and *Atlantis Rising.* As the title suggests, the book concentrates on the Saurians and includes rules for role-playing a sect of the species, detailed information on the Men in Black, and listings of new skills, traits, and technology.

Terra Incognito: International Sourcebook, $20, Aug. Foreign conspiracies are the rule of the day in this sourcebook with information about secrets in Japan, Australia, Hong Kong, Europe, South America, and Antarctica. The 160-page sourcebook contains rules for creating foreign agents, information on new enemies and allies of Aegis Cells, and new gear and traits.

Witchcraft:

Mystery Codex, $20, Oct. The 160-page sourcebook is the first release in Eden's revised edition of C.J. Carella's *Witchcraft* role-playing system. (See the news section and below for more information.) Information on the Knights Templar, the Secret Dragons' martial artists, and the inhuman Pariahs, as well as details on Covenants, new Invocations, Gifted powers, and new supernatural threats, is included, as well as rules for playing Relentess Dead, Phantasms, and Vampires as characters.

Witchcraft, $28, winter. The revised edition of the main rulebook is 232 pages long and expands on Carella's role-playing system, where player characters, known as The Gifted, have been practicing their mystical powers in secret for centuries and now have reached the end of their period of hiding. The game can use dice or cards or be completely story-driven, depending on the individual gaming group's desires.

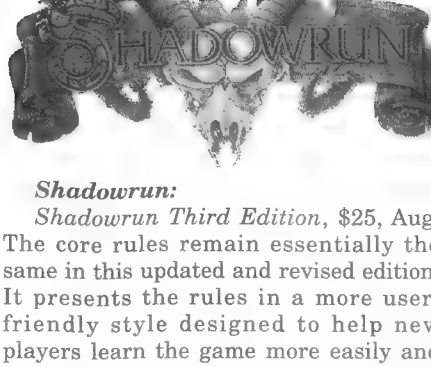
FASA

BattleTech:

BattleTech Technical Readout: 3060, $22, Aug. The Inner Sphere attacks the Clan homeworlds, where they face new Clan BattleMechs and other vehicles that utilize the Clans' superior technology. Illustrations and statistics for both Inner Sphere and Clan BattleMechs, tanks, hovercraft, VTOLs, and other new technology is included.

BattleTech Record Sheets 3060, $20, Sept. In addition to pre-generated BattleTech record sheets for the new equipment contained in *Technical Readout 3060*, this release contains sheets for every type of battle armor and new 'Mech variants which have the latest weaponry.

Earthdawn: *Dragons,* $22, Aug. A rogue dragon breaks away from its secretive species and reveals the group's secrets and plans for Barsaive's future.



Shadowrun:

Shadowrun Third Edition, $25, Aug The core rules remain essentially the same in this updated and revised edition It presents the rules in a more user friendly style designed to help new players learn the game more easily and to give experienced players a fresh angle for ongoing games. Sourcebooks and adventures are fully compatible. The *Shadowrun* timeline is also updated.

Renraku Arcology: Shutdown, $15 Sept. Renraku's Seattle Arcology shuts down, trapping 100,000 people inside in this *Shadowrun* adventure. In addition to rescuing those trapped, players investigate the cause of the shutdown and attempt to learn the secrets of the mega corp.

Shadowrun Gamemaster Screen, $15 Sept. In addition to the screen, which contains charts and tables to aid the gamemaster, the package includes a book of information on new creatures and their powers, new contacts, and the movers and shakers in the *Shadowrun* world.

New Seattle, $20, Sept. This revision of a *Shadowrun* sourcebook gives details on Seattle's survival of Dunkelzahn's election and assassination, the ongoing Mob and corporate wars, and the Renraku Arcology shutdown.

Guardians of Order

Sailor Moon Role-Playing Game and Resource Book, $24.95, Sept. Fully compatible with the *Big Eyes, Small Mouth* anime role-playing game, this system features easy-to-learn rules and allows players to become either a Sailor Scout or Negaverse villain. Characters can be original or based on those from the animated series. In addition, the resource book contains information on the animated series, including an episode guide, season summaries, a list of the voice actors, the mythology behind the characters' names, and behind-the-scenes information on the Japanese production.

Last Unicorn Games

Star Trek: The Next Generation Role-Playing Game:

Star Trek: The Next Generation Role Playing Game, $30, Aug. Venture into the final frontier as a Starfleet officer, explorer, or diplomat. This 288-page hardcover rulebook features fast and simple rules mechanics using Last Unicorn's new ICON system, a readymade stellar system and adventure, an alien race and world-creation system for making and populating the players' own worlds, star

(Continues on Page 26

GAMES WORKSHOP

WARHAMMER

SUMMER

Golgfag Ogre Mercenary Captain.

WARHAMMER SIEGE

A new supplement for Warhammer games, and includes all the additional rules to lay siege to a fortress, battering down walls and towers or beating the attacker back in a valiant defence. Using armies of Citadel Miniatures you can create a stirring spectacle of assaults and battles [illegible] of forts [illegible] throughout the Warhammer World. Includes [illegible] siege scenarios for [illegible], and [illegible] types of fortification [illegible] Oath Stone [illegible] the [illegible] of the [illegible]

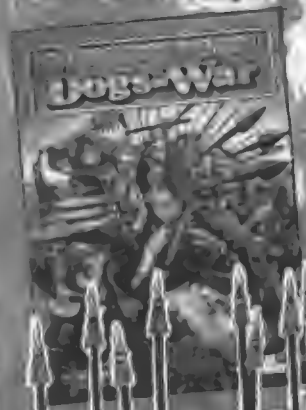
WARHAMMER SIEGE ARMY

SIEGE BOOK

What good is a Siege [illegible] without a castle? There are [illegible] for [illegible] building your own [illegible] Warhammer [illegible] book but [illegible] look for the [illegible] of Castle Altdorf and [illegible]. The most [illegible] will be in Gale with Citadel [illegible] What fun is a [illegible] if you can't pour boiling oil on the [illegible]? There are [illegible] Attackers and Defenders [illegible] individual equipment [illegible] boiling oil, battering rams [illegible]

WARHAMMER ARMIES

DOGS OF WAR

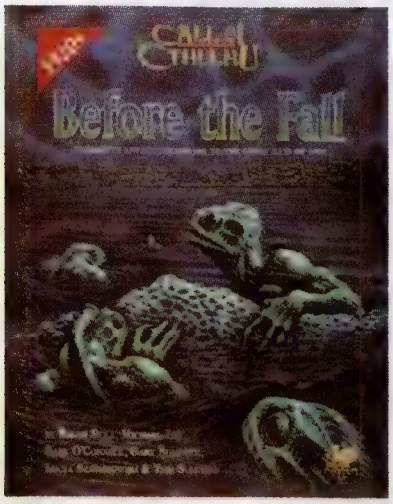


This book explains how to build an entire army of Dogs of War for the Warhammer [illegible] and includes rules for recruiting mercenary regiments into any Warhammer army. This book will be supported by a huge line of miniatures. From the [illegible] Dwarf Slayer Pirates to the Alcatani Fellowship [illegible] there are dozens upon dozens of models to choose from. Start a new army or [illegible] existing armies.

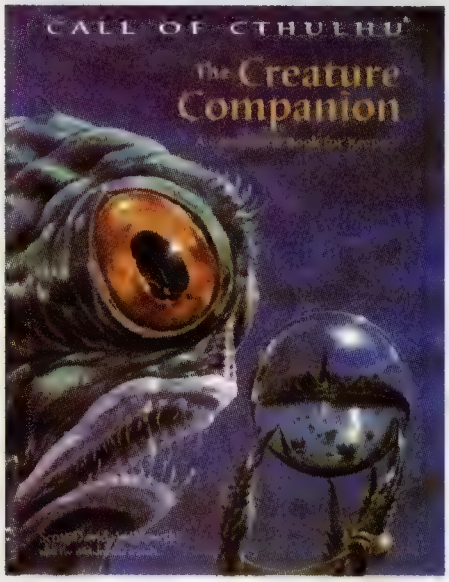
Long Drang Slayer's Pirates.

Captain Roderigo Delmonte and his Alcatani Fellowship.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL



The Creature Companion, $19.95, Sept. This book for Keepers (game masters) contains game statistics for more than 100 creatures, as well as a travelogue of additional detail from the famed Cthulhu mythos explorer Sir Hansen Poplan. Contains most of the material from the previously published *Ye Booke of Monstres I* and *II.*



Dream Pod 9

Tribe 8:

Weaver's Resource and Screen, $19.95, Aug. Includes a complete adventure, "Enemy of My Enemy," guidelines for Weavers (game masters) on creating heroic cycles (campaigns) for *Tribe 8,* useful nonplayer character archetypes, and a three-panel screen with all relevant game tables. The scenario starts off "Children of Prophecy," the first cycle in the overarching Tribe 8 storyline.

Vimary Sourcebook, $19.95, Oct. Vimary is the game's main setting. Learn more about the tribes and their secret history, visit the twisted lands of the monstrous Z'bri, see the initiatives of the Fallen outcasts, learn the fate of the secretive Keepers. Characters and adventure resources to help Weavers.

Eden Studios

Conspiracy X:

Exodus: The Saurian Sourcebook, $18, late July. Scheduled for release just prior to Gen Con, *Exodus* completes the trilogy of sourcebooks on the alien races begun with *Nemesis* and *Atlantis Rising.* As the title suggests, the book concentrates on the Saurians and includes rules for role-playing a sect of the species, detailed information on the Men in Black, and listings of new skills, traits, and technology.

Terra Incognito: International Sourcebook, $20, Aug. Foreign conspiracies are the rule of the day in this sourcebook with information about secrets in Japan, Australia, Hong Kong, Europe, South America, and Antarctica. The 160-page sourcebook contains rules for creating foreign agents, information on new enemies and allies of Aegis Cells, and new gear and traits.

Witchcraft:

Mystery Codex, $20, Oct. The 160-page sourcebook is the first release in Eden's revised edition of C.J. Carella's *Witchcraft* role-playing system. (See the news section and below for more information.) Information on the Knights Templar, the Secret Dragons' martial artists, and the inhuman Pariahs, as well as details on Covenants, new Invocations, Gifted powers, and new supernatural threats, is included, as well as rules for playing Relentless Dead, Phantasms, and Vampires as characters.

Witchcraft, $28, winter. The revised edition of the main rulebook is 232 pages long and expands on Carella's role-playing system, where player characters, known as The Gifted, have been practicing their mystical powers in secret for centuries and now have reached the end of their period of hiding. The game can use dice or cards or be completely story-driven, depending on the individual gaming group's desires.

FASA

BattleTech:

BattleTech Technical Readout: 3060, $22, Aug. The Inner Sphere attacks the Clan homeworlds, where they face new Clan BattleMechs and other vehicles that utilize the Clans' superior technology. Illustrations and statistics for both Inner Sphere and Clan BattleMechs, tanks, hovercraft, VTOLs, and other new technology is included.

BattleTech Record Sheets 3060, $20, Sept. In addition to pre-generated BattleTech record sheets for the new equipment contained in *Technical Readout 3060,* this release contains sheets for every type of battle armor and new 'Mech variants which have the latest weaponry.

Earthdawn: *Dragons,* $22, Aug. A rogue dragon breaks away from its secretive species and reveals the group's secrets and plans for Barsaive's future.

Shadowrun:

Shadowrun Third Edition, $25, Aug. The core rules remain essentially the same in this updated and revised edition. It presents the rules in a more user-friendly style designed to help new players learn the game more easily and to give experienced players a fresh angle for ongoing games. Sourcebooks and adventures are fully compatible. The *Shadowrun* timeline is also updated.

Renraku Arcology: Shutdown, $15, Sept. Renraku's Seattle Arcology shuts down, trapping 100,000 people inside in this *Shadowrun* adventure. In addition to rescuing those trapped, players investigate the cause of the shutdown and attempt to learn the secrets of the megacorp.

Shadowrun Gamemaster Screen, $15, Sept. In addition to the screen, which contains charts and tables to aid the gamemaster, the package includes a book of information on new creatures and their powers, new contacts, and the movers and shakers in the *Shadowrun* world.

New Seattle, $20, Sept. This revision of a *Shadowrun* sourcebook gives details on Seattle's survival of Dunkelzahn's election and assassination, the ongoing Mob and corporate wars, and the Renraku Arcology shutdown.

Guardians of Order

Sailor Moon Role-Playing Game and Resource Book, $24.95, Sept. Fully compatible with the *Big Eyes, Small Mouth* anime role-playing game, this system features easy-to-learn rules and allows players to become either a Sailor Scout or Negaverse villain. Characters can be original or based on those from the animated series. In addition, the resource book contains information on the animated series, including an episode guide, season summaries, a list of the voice actors, the mythology behind the character names, and behind-the-scenes information on the Japanese production.

Last Unicorn Games

Star Trek: The Next Generation Role-Playing Game:

Star Trek: The Next Generation Role-Playing Game, $30, Aug. Venture into the final frontier as a Starfleet officer, explorer, or diplomat. This 288-page hardcover rulebook features fast and simple rules mechanics using Last Unicorn's new ICON system, a readymade stellar system and adventure, an alien race and world-creation system for making and populating the players' own worlds, star-

(Continues on Page 26)

GAMES WORKSHOP

WARHAMMER

SUMMER

Golgfag Ogre Mercenary Captain.

WARHAMMER SIEGE

Warhammer Siege is a supplement to the Warhammer game and includes all the additional rules to lay siege to a fortress, battering down its walls and towers or beating the attackers back in a valiant defense. Using armies of Citadel Miniatures you can create a stirring spectacle of assaults and bitter battles on the ramparts of forts and castles throughout the Warhammer World. Included are full rules, nine scenarios for siege battles, and background on every type of fortification - from High Elven spires to the jungle fortresses of the Lizardmen.

WARHAMMER CASTLE AND BOXED SETS

What good is a Siege book without a castle? There are complete instructions on building your own in the Warhammer Siege book, but *even better*, look for the release of Games Workshop's Castle. This massive structure will be in scale with Citadel Miniatures! And what fun is a castle unless you can pour boiling oil on the oncoming foe? There are boxed sets for both Attackers and Defenders - giving players useful equipment like ladders, boiling oil, battering rams, and rock droppers.

WARHAMMER ARMIES DOGS OF WAR

This book explains how to build an entire army of Dogs of War for the Warhammer battlefield and includes rules for recruiting mercenary regiments into any Warhammer army. This book will be supported by a huge line of miniatures. From the Long Drong Slayer Pirates to the Alcatani Fellowship, there are dozens upon dozens of models to choose from. Start a new army or hire some mercenaries to beef up existing armies.

Long Drong Slayer's Pirates.

Captain Roderigo Delmonte and his Alcatani Fellowship.

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Role-Playing Games
From Page 24

ship engagement rules, and detailed information on the United Federation of Planets. According to Last Unicorn, this will be the first of four *Star Trek* games, with releases on the classic series, *Deep Space Nine,* and *Voyager* to follow.

Narrator's Toolkit, $15, Aug. This color cardstock screen comes with a 64-page book full of storytelling hints and design tricks for running *Star Trek: The Next Generation* adventures. In also contains a complete adventure, "Hide and Q," based on the TV episode of the same name.

UFP Away Team miniatures, $17.99, Aug. Seven metal miniatures for use with the role-playing game: Federation command officer, security chief, engineering specialist, medical technician, two security personnel, and a Commander William Riker figure.

A Fragile Peace, $15, Sept. This 96-page book takes a detailed look at the Romulan Neutral Zone, including the planets, outposts, characters, and politics of the volatile border region, giving players a glimpse at the machinations of the Tal Shiar, the Romulan Star Empire's elite intelligence service. It also includes four complete adventures which can be linked to form a campaign set in this tense region. Can you maintain the fragile peace between the Romulans and the Federation?

The Price of Freedom, $25, Sept. This is a 160-page hardcover sourcebook for the United Federation of Planets for both players and Narrators (game masters). It includes information about Federation history, membership, politics, economy, Starfleet and its many branches, technology, and vessels, and important personalities within the Federation. Also includes new ships and new templates, plus several short adventures set in Federation space.

UFP Bridge Crew miniatures, $17.99, Sept. Contains seven metal figures: Federation conn officer, communications officer, science officer, second-in-command, flight officer, tactical officer, and a figure of Lt. Commander Data.

The Romulans, $30, Oct. This boxed set contains one 96-page book, two 32-page books, a fold-out map, and character templates, all focusing on the Romulan Star Empire. The books contain comprehensive discussions of everything Romulan, from imperial history and politics to Romulan religion and culture. Includes new Romulan technology and ships, as well as new Romulan character templates, plus several short adventures set in Romulan space, designed to tie in with the campaign begun in *A Fragile Peace.*

The First Line: The Starfleet Intelligence Manual, $15, Oct. A 96-page book focusing on Starfleet Intelligence's unending vigil over threats to Federation peace. Provides both players and Narrators with the information they need for adventures in the shadowy world of 24th-century espionage, including information about rival organizations, Federation espionage technology, and locations no reputable Starfleet officer would ever want to visit.

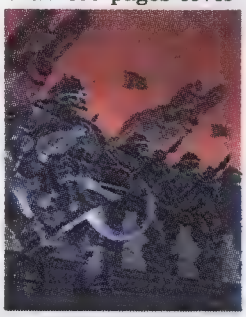
UFP Ships of the Line miniatures, $17.99, Oct. Seven metal figures for use with the role-playing game as well as the upcoming *Engage!* starship miniatures game. The Federation ship classes included are: Ambassador, Nebula, Oberth, Excelsior, Constellation, Antares, and a Galaxy-class *Enterprise-D* figure.

Romulan Ships miniatures, $17.99, Oct. Seven metal Romulan ships: Two D'deridex-class warbirds, two Deresus-class scout ships, a T'rasus-class survey vessel, D'valek-class light warbird, and the Theta-class warp shuttle.

Palladium Books

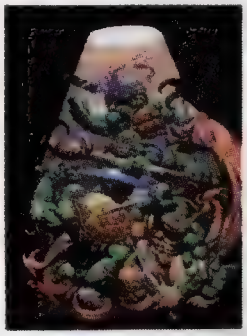
Rifts:

World Book 17: Warlords of Russia, $20.95, Aug. More than 200 pages covering the monster-ridden area of Russia and the slavic countries, where the Warlords, part barbarian, part animal, and part machine, dominate the land with their technological sorcery and cyborg troops.



World Book 18: Mystic Russia, $16.95, Aug. Picking up where *Warlords* leaves off, this 160-page volume focuses on the mystical, monstrous, and demonic aspects of the country and its people, both human and inhuman. Includes information on: D-Bees, ancient gods and monsters; Russian magic; gypsies and their secrets; and a dangerous link to the Americas.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles & Other Strangeness 2nd Ed., $12.95, Oct.-Nov. Mutant super-hero action compatible with the 2nd edition *Heroes Unlimited* rules. Includes the lowdown on the mutant underground, more than 100 different mutant animals, and rules for creating more, villains, and adventures ideas. 128 pages.



Pinnacle Entertainment Group

Deadlands: *Tales o' Terror: 1877,* $20, Aug. This update book advances the game's alternate history by a year.

Deadlands: Hell on Earth:

Deadlands: Hell on Earth, $30, Aug. Pinnacle's not saying much about this 224-page hardcover except that it is an alternate setting for the award-winning *Deadlands* role-playing game and uses the same rules.

Radiation Screen, $15, Aug. A referee's screen and 40-page adventure.

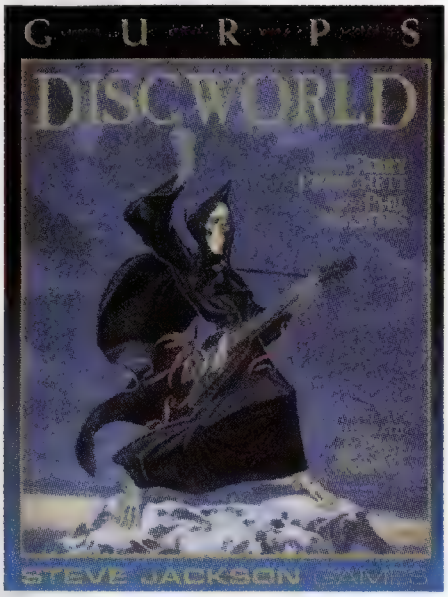
Hell on Earth miniatures, $2.95 each, Aug. Again, Pinnacle isn't revealing much before it reveals the final game at Gen Con.

Precedence

Immortal: *Pride Peri,* $14.95, Aug. This 96-page sourcebook provides details on the immortal Peri, living weapons who have shaped history in the form of Excalibur (Arthur's sword) and Mjolnir (Thor's hammer).

Steve Jackson Games

GURPS:



Discworld, $26.95, Aug. Based on the humorous fantasy novels by Terry Pratchett. Includes *GURPS Lite,* a simplified set of *GURPS* rules that allows this book to be used as a stand-alone role-playing game. 240 pages.

Egypt, Aug. There's a lot of adventure to be found in 5,000 years of history and in this sourcebook for adding Egyptian elements to your *GURPS* campaign.

Traveller, Sept. An official alternate universe for Imperium's science-fiction role-playing game *Traveller.* The Third Imperium is opened for adventure with the *GURPS* rules.

Undead, Sept. The complete "book of the dead" for *GURPS.* Everything from subtle hauntings to undead necromancers, from Gothic vampires to the brain-eating zombies of the B-movies. Also includes discussions of such related topics as tombs, death gods, embalming, funerary rites, grave robbery, and pathology.

In Nomine: *The Final Trumpet,* Aug. The conclusion to "The Revelations Cycle." Events have convinced the more militant Superiors on both sides that the

(Continues on Page 28)

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From Page 26

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TSR

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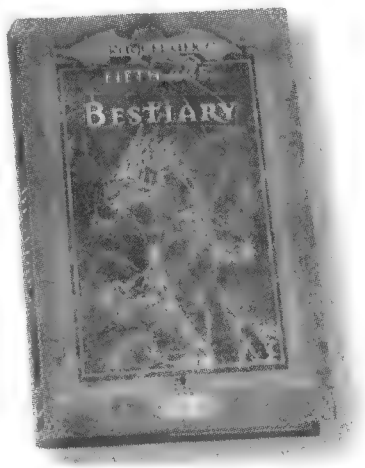

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(Continues on Page 30)

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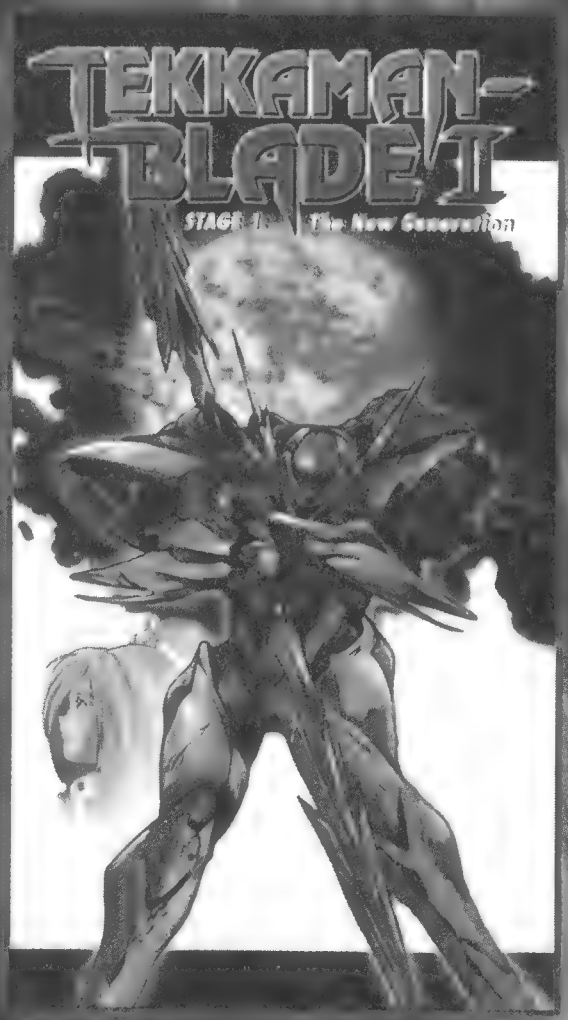

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Ten years have passed since the original series (Teknoman to fans of the U.S. TV series) as a new breed of Tekkaman face off against their powerful enemy - Radham. Our heroes must struggle to overcome the shadows of their past and scramble to rebuild their team, as they prepare to battle against extreme odds with the fate of humanity at stake. Tekkaman Blade II is rife with conflict, both internal and external, and soon to become a classic.

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Not rated: Contains some violence and brief nudity. Parental discretion advised.

Coming in August:

also coming: Tekkaman Blade II: Stage 3

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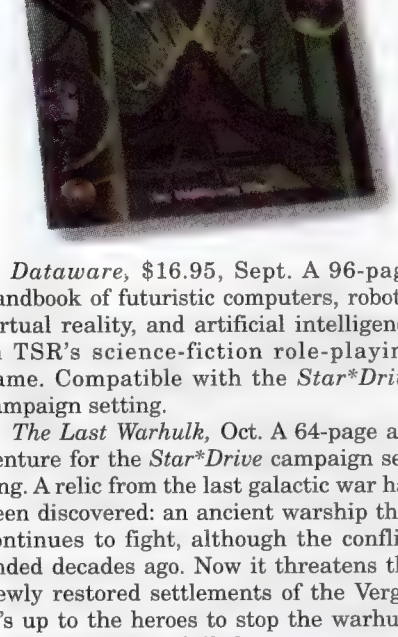
Alternity:

Arms & Equipment Guide, Aug. Everything needed to survive the *Star*Drive* campaign, from protective gear to weapons of mass destruction. This 96-page book contains more than 100 items, with descriptions, game statistics, and illustrations. While created for the *Star*Drive* campaign, most of these items can be incorporated into any science-fiction, space-opera setting.



Dataware, $16.95, Sept. A 96-page handbook of futuristic computers, robots, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence in TSR's science-fiction role-playing game. Compatible with the *Star*Drive* campaign setting.

The Last Warhulk, Oct. A 64-page adventure for the *Star*Drive* campaign setting. A relic from the last galactic war has been discovered: an ancient warship that continues to fight, although the conflict ended decades ago. Now it threatens the newly restored settlements of the Verge. It's up to the heroes to stop the warhulk before millions are killed.

White Wolf Publishing

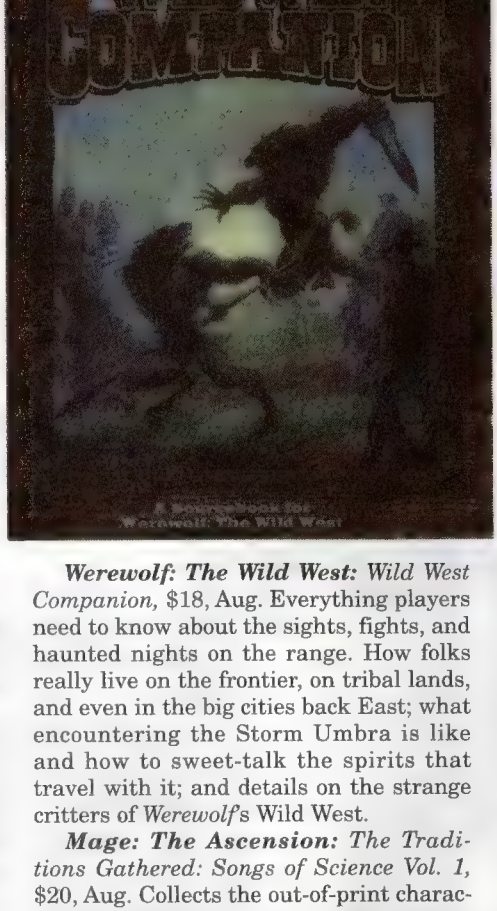
World of Darkness: *The Bygone Bestiary,* $16, Sept. A sourcebook on monsters and supernatural creatures in the World of Darkness, including the unicorn, the manticore, the witch-cat, and the mermaid. White Wolf especially recommends this volume for use with *Mage: The Sorcerers Crusade.*

Vampire: The Masquerade: *Transylvania Chronicles 2: Son of the Dragon,* $15, Aug. Can be used with both *Vampire: The Masquerade* and *Vampire: The Dark Ages.* Continues the adventure begun in *Dark Tides Rising.* The players' characters are now centuries-old veterans of the great Jyhad, with their own estates and connections in the fledgling Camarilla, Sabbat, or even both. Yet not even their power may be enough to stand against the Impaler, Dracula himself.

Werewolf: The Apocalypse:

Wendigo Tribebook, $10, Aug. Reveals the secrets and ways of the purest of the Pure Ones. Learn the special battle techniques of these fierce warriors or read their tales of winter magic.

Litany of the Tribes Vol. 3, $20, Sep. Collects the out-of-print tribe books *Red Talons, Shadow Lords,* and *Silent Striders.*

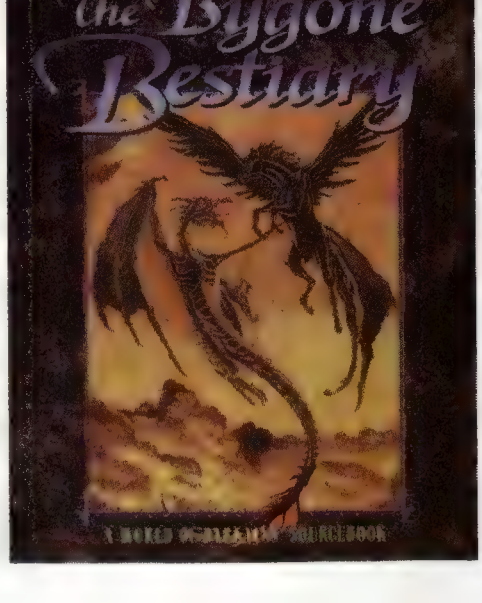


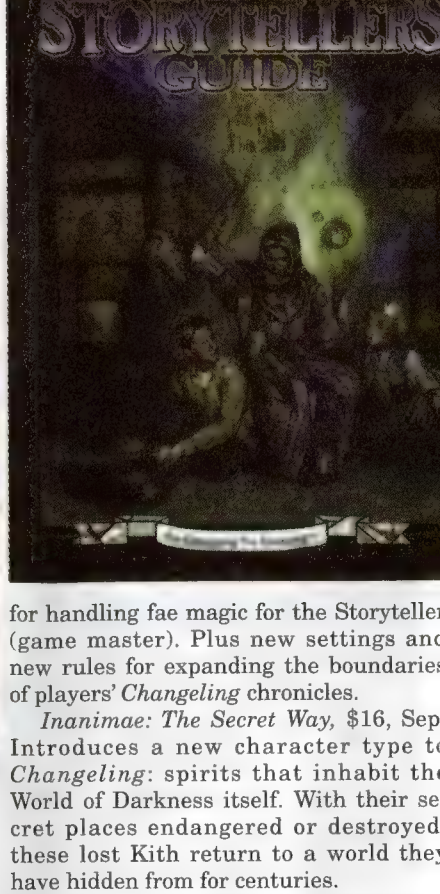
Werewolf: The Wild West: *Wild West Companion,* $18, Aug. Everything players need to know about the sights, fights, and haunted nights on the range. How folks really live on the frontier, on tribal lands, and even in the big cities back East; what encountering the Storm Umbra is like and how to sweet-talk the spirits that travel with it; and details on the strange critters of *Werewolf*'s Wild West.

Mage: The Ascension: *The Traditions Gathered: Songs of Science Vol. 1,* $20, Aug. Collects the out-of-print character sourcebooks for the Virtual Adepts, Sons of Ether, and Order of Hermes.

Changeling: The Dreaming:

The Changeling Storyteller's Guide, $18, Aug. New information, rules clarifications, and new and advanced systems





for handling fae magic for the Storyteller (game master). Plus new settings and new rules for expanding the boundaries of players' *Changeling* chronicles.

Inanimae: The Secret Way, $16, Sep Introduces a new character type t *Changeling*: spirits that inhabit th World of Darkness itself. With their se cret places endangered or destroyed these lost Kith return to a world they have hidden from for centuries.

Wraith: The Oblivion: *Renegades* $16, Oct. You've heard the Hierarchy's side of the story; now it's the opposition's turn. Learn about rabble-rousers, brig ands, and peaceniks who have been around ever since Charon proclaimed himself emperor.

Mind's Eye Theatre: *Secrets of Elysium,* $15, Sept. Rules for elder vampire in the live-action World of Darkness Everything players need, from Experience Trait charts to Master-class Disciplines, is included, as well as extended Disciplines for Dark Ages settings.

Trinity:

Darkness Revealed: Passage through Shadow, $15.95, Aug. The second of th three-part *Darkness Revealed* adventur series. It contains three major scenario which can be run as an ongoing series o as part of the Storyteller's own epic. Als contains useful setting information, new characters, and equipment.

America Offline, $17.95, Sept. Find out what it's like to be an electrokinetic to control electricity with a thought. Find out what makes the biotech corporation Orgotek tick, discover how the once-great nations of North America have fallen from grace, and see the stark division between life in the sterile metroplexes and in the desolation of America's heartland.

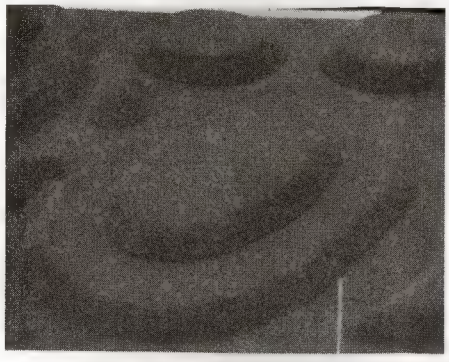
Field Report: Alien Races, $4.95, Oct This second field report reveals information about humanity's allies and enemies in space: the enigmatic Qin, the hostile Chromatics, and the ominous Coalition.

GameTime

The Buyer's Guide to Miniatures Games

Here are some of the major miniatures game releases currentl scheduled for release from August through October. The releas months listed are only tentative and subject to change, as are th manufacturers' suggested retail prices. At the end of all four *Buyer' Guide* sections, you'll find a list of everything featured in this issu of *GameTime*, which you can use to keep track of the games you'r interested in. You can even take a copy to your local retailer wit the games you want marked, so that he or she can order them fo you as they become available.

Agents of Gaming



Terrain Creations

Contoured Hill Set (green), $39.95 for 12 pieces, August.

Terrain Creations Sampler (brown), $9.95 for four pieces, September.

Basic Hill Set (brown), $39.95 for 12 pieces, October.

Babylon 5 Wars

Drazi ships, August. Sunhawk and Strikehawk, $8.95; Sky Serpent Heavy Fighter (three per pack), $6.95.

Vree ships, August. Xill Battle Saucer, $11.95; Xorr War Saucer, $8.95; Tzymm Heavy Fighter (three per pack), $6.95.

Brakiri ships, September. Avioki Heavy Cruiser and Tashkat Advanced Cruiser, $11.95; Falkosi Light Fighter (three per pack); $6.95.

Starsiege: Rebellion

Starsiege: Rebellion, $59.95, August. Based on the *Earthsiege* computer-game series by Dynamix and Sierra Online and set in the *Earthsiege III* time period. *Starsiege: Rebellion* recreates the battles fought between humans and Cybrids, with information on the Human Terran Defense Forces, Martian Rebels, and artificially intelligent Cybrids. The box will include 18 to 20 10mm figures as well as thermoformed buildings and terrain pieces.

Imperial figures, August. Obsidia Tanks (two per pack), Talon Herc (two and Minotaur Herc, $8.95; Osprey Tan (two) and Spartan Bike (four), $6.95 Basilisk Herc, Nike Siege Gun, Over lord Bomber, and Banshee VTOL (two $10.95.

Cybrid figures, August. Seeker Her

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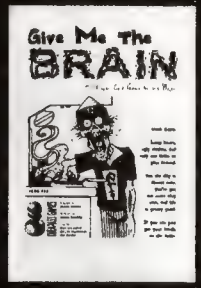
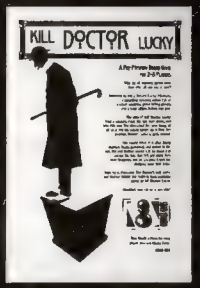


GIVE ME THE BRAIN
Best Traditional Card Game of 1997



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(two), Goad Herc (two), and Recluse Tank (two), $8.95; Shepherd Herc, $10.95; Adjudicator Herc, $12.95.

Rebel figures, August. Dreadlock Tank (two), $6.95; Emancipator Herc (two), $8.95; Hellion Bike (four), $6.95.

Rifts: Coalition Wars, $44.95, fall. Based on the *Rifts* role-playing game from Palladium Books. The boxed game features coalition troops facing the forces of the Federation of Magic. Free Quebec, Tolkeen, Wild West, Vampire Kingdoms, and more will be covered in the game. 28mm figures will be included in the game.

Werewolf: Wyrm Wars, $44.95, fall/winter. Based on White Wolf's *Werewolf* role-playing game. Recreating battles between the forces of the Wyrm and Gaia, the game will include rules and statistics for werewolves, banes, fomori, Pentex, and others. A dozen 28mm werewolves are included in the box.

Alderac Entertainment Group

Clan War

Clan War Boxed Set, $74.95, August. Set in *Legend of the Five Rings*' Rokugan, the boxed set includes rules, army lists, dice, tactical cards, and 58 25mm metal figures.

Infantry Expansion, $34.95, August. Contains 28 metal infantry figures: 14 archers and 14 infantry. Four different figure designs.

Cavalry Expansion, $39.95, August. Contains 12 metal cavalry figures. Two different horses, two different riders.

Unit Packs, August. Light Infantry (four figures), Heavy Cavalry (four), Shugenja (four), Yojimbo (four), and Ogre Bushi (two), $11.95; Courtiers (two) and Geisha (two), $6.25.

Personality Packs, August. Crab Clan's Hida Amoro and a mounted Hida Tsuru and Lion Clan's Matsu Yojo and a mounted Matsu Agetoki, $11.95; Crane Clan's Doji Yosai and Asahina Tomo and Phoenix Clan's Isawa Uona and Isawa Tadaka, $7.95.

Dream Pod 9

Heavy Gear

Dream Pod 9 begins releasing its own line of *Heavy Gear* miniatures in July, with two new releases scheduled for each month through the end of the year. The new line is 1/144 scale, slightly smaller than the previously released figures from RAFM.

Heavy Gear miniatures, August: Northern Guards Strike Gear Squadron (three Hunters, two Jaguars) and Allied Southern Territories Strike Gear Cadre (three Jägers, two Black Mambas), $24.95.

September: Northern Guards Recon Gear Squadron (four Cheetahs, one Jaguar) and Fire Support Gear Squadron (two Hunters, one Jaguar, two Grizzlies), $24.95.

October: Northern Guards Assault Armored Squadron (three Mammoths), $29.95; and Infantry Platoon (two Badger APCs and four Standard Infantry Squads), $24.95.

Northern Guards Army List, $24.95, August.

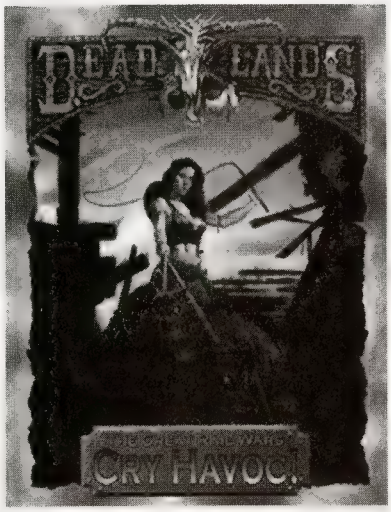
Terra Nova Sourcebook 2nd Ed., $24.95, September.

Southern MILICIA Army List, $23.95, October.

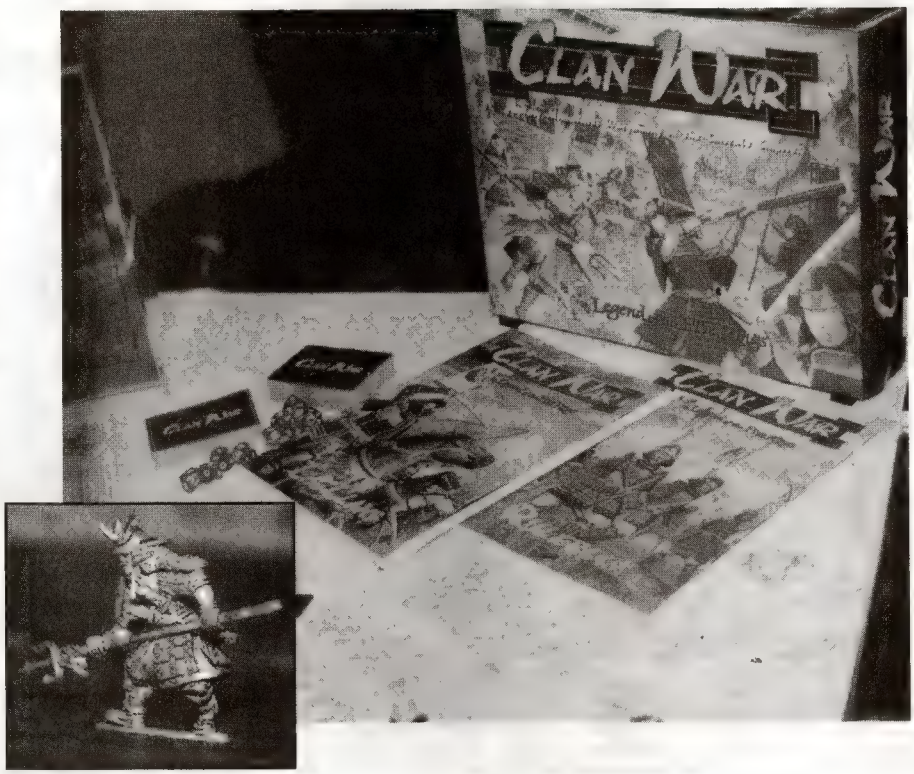
Holistic Design

Carnage, $60, August. Reptilian Herptars wage war against the human Brigandans in this boxed fantasy miniatures game. Designed to be a simple, fun miniatures battle game. Box contains rules, dice, and plastic miniatures sculpted by Bob Naismith.

Pinnacle Entertainment Group



Deadlands: The Great Rail Wars: Cry Havoc!, $24.95, August. This 80-page rules update and compendium includes new hexes and miracles, as well as Kung Fu rules and new Edges and Hindrances. Also includes 16 full-color cardstock sheets with new templates and troop cards.



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GameTime

The Buyer's Guide to Trading-Card Games

Here are some of the major trading-card game releases currently scheduled for release from August through October. The release months listed are only tentative and subject to change, as are the manufacturers' suggested retail prices. At the end of all four *Buyer's Guide* sections, you'll find a list of everything featured in this issue of *GameTime,* which you can use to keep track of the games you're interested in. You can even take a copy to your local retailer with the games you want marked, so that he or she can order them for you as they become available.

Five Rings Publishing

Deadlands: Doomtown: *Episodes 5-7,* $8.99 starter decks, $2.99 booster packs, monthly, Aug. through Oct. In Doomtown, players form outfits to seize control of Gammora, a wild, mostly lawless boomtown. Each episode adds a new set of cards to the Doomtown storyline. Designed for intermediate to advanced players.

Dune: *Thunder at Twilight,* $8.99 starter decks, $2.99 booster packs, Sept. Based on Frank Herbert's novel *Dune.* Players try to accumulate and control the spice-drug Melange, which is found only on the desert world Arrakis, known as Dune to its inhabitants. The *Thunder at Twilight* expansion adds two new factions and about 150 new cards to the game. Designed for intermediate to advanced players.

Legend of the Burning Sands: *Shadow of the Tyrant Episodes 1-4,* $8.99 starter decks, $2.99 booster packs, Aug. through Oct. The Scorpion Clan from *Legend of the Five Rings* has been exiled from the Emerald Empire. Bayushi Kachiko has led her people into the blasted desert known as the Burning Sands, where water is life. Raiding nomads strike without warning; ancient, once-powerful cities are now deserted; and watching over all is the Tyrant, an immortal who seeks to keep the land subjugated. Each episode will add a new group of cards tied to the ongoing storyline. Designed for intermediate to advanced players.

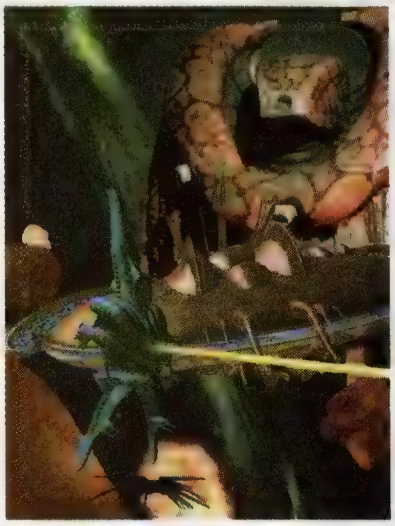
Legend of the Five Rings: *The Hidden Emperor Episodes 3-5,* $7.99 starter decks, $1.99 booster packs, monthly, Aug. through Oct. The clans of the Empire of Rokugan are thrown into upheaval after the emperor, Toturi, vanishes from the Imperial Palace. Each episode adds a new group of cards tied in with the ongoing storyline. Designed for intermediate to advanced players.

Precedence

Babylon 5:

Babylon 5 Deluxe Edition, $1.95 booster packs, Aug. *Deluxe Edition*'s eight-card booster packs will include the same cards as the original edition, with improved art and revised text. Precedence will randomly include a new autograph card signed by Claudia Christian (Commander Susan Ivanova) in this edition. Each 24-pack booster display box will also include an individually wrapped bonus card not found in the regular set.

Babylon 5 Strategy Guide, $19.99, Aug. More than 200 pages written by Lowell Cunningham (creator of the original *Men in Black* comic-book series), this book features fully revised and annotated rules, strategy tips, clarifications, and official rulings on card play, deck construction notes, and the text of all cards through *The Shadows* expansion set.



The Great War, $8.95 starter decks, $2.49 booster packs, Oct. This 350-card expansion will focus on the planet-destroying conflict between the Shadows and the Vorlons and will introduce a new class of cards called "contingencies." The expansion will also contain randomly inserted cards autographed by Peter Jurasik (Londo Mollari). Precedence also plans to include a specially wrapped exclusive game card which will be attached to every 20-pack booster display box. *The Great War* will be available in 10-card booster packs and in two preconstructed 60-card starter decks (Home Factions and The Non-Aligned Worlds), which contain a sheet of "Mark" counters and revised and updated rules for any number of players.

Wizards of the Coast

Magic: The Gathering:

Unglued, $1.99 boosters, Aug. This limited-edition supplement features parodies of popular *Magic* cards. It's not legal for tournament use; it was developed for casual and social play. 94 new cards are available in the 10-card booster packs. *Unglued* is playable with standard *Magic* cards and includes five specially designed basic lands and six different token cards.

Portal II Gift Box, $12.99, Aug. Contains two preconstructed *Portal II* decks, two booster packs, two score-keeping beads, two playmats, a step-by-step play guide, and *The Official Guide to Portal,* which provides strategy tips and a complete card list. Designed for new players.

1998 World Championship Decks, $9.99, Oct. This commemorative, gold-bordered card set reproduces four of the top competing decks from this year's *Magic: The Gathering* World Championships. Each deck sold separately. Designed for expert players.

Urza's Saga, $8.99 starter deck, $2.99 booster pack. Oct. Like other large *Magic* expansions, *Urza's Saga* can be played alone or with other *Magic* cards. Contains more than 300 new cards available in starter decks and booster packs. Designed for expert players.

BattleTech: *Commander's Edition,* $8.99 starter deck, $2.99 booster pack. Aug. The third edition of the *BattleTech* trading-card game includes approximately 300 cards available in booster 15-card booster packs as well as Inner Sphere and Clan preconstructed starter decks.

Xena: Warrior Princess: *Battle Cry,* $2.49, Oct. The first expansion for this Arc System game. Designed for new players.

Art for the "Jack in the Mox" card from ***Magic: The Gathering: Unglued.***

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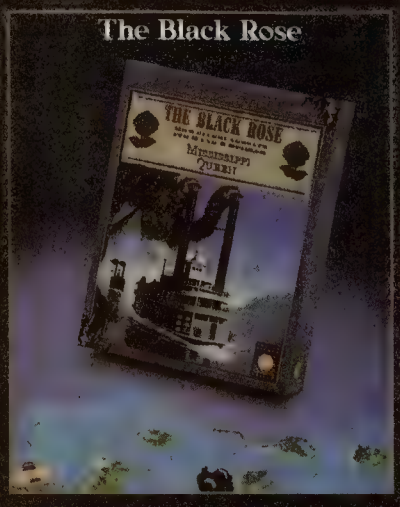

MISSISSIPPI QUEEN

Spiel de Jahres winner 1997

Race down the Mississippi in the paddle wheelers of yesteryear, vying with other players for passengers and passage around islands and the shore in this ever changing river racing game. $39.95

THE BLACK ROSE

The expansion for the award-winning Mississippi Queen board game puts a sixth player on the river, flotsam, sandbars, the "Black Rose" river-boat and lots of new variants. $19.95

FOSSIL

Fossils are able to tell us fascinating stories from our pre-historic past. Only when all the pieces are found and fit together like a puzzle, can the story be told. Then, those involved can share in the fame that goes with such discoveries. $29.95

IDO

A work of art that is also a game! Players move colorful blocks across an abstract canvas, creating shifting geometric patterns while trying to transport 4 of their blocks from one side of the board to the other. $49.95

LOWENHERZ

German Game Prize Winner 1997

The King is dying, and as one of four princes, you are in line to succeed him. To become king you must demonstrate your ability to rule by gaining control over more land than the others. $39.95

EDISON & CO.

Professor Zacharias has invented a test to determine which one of four designs Edison & Co. will continue working on. Players use their influence to move the vehicles into scoring positions. $39.95

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GameTime

The Buyer's Guide to Board, Family, and Strategy Games

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Acclaim

Turok 2: Seeds of Evil, Oct. The sequel to Acclaim's original *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter,* will be available for the N64 and PC platforms. Players can choose quest mode for single-player action or battle it out with up to four players in a split-screen deathmatch mode. Multi-player options include team play, death matches, and a new game called "Frag Tag."

Buzz Games

Chaos Rules!, $9.95, summer. The forces of Chaos and Order battle it out in this card game which has the simple goal of spelling out the word Chaos! using cards of one type, while cards of a second type temporarily change the rules of the game. The game takes about five minutes to learn and approximately 20 minutes to play. A second deck is required for five to eight players.

Crisis, $24.95, fall. The board game begins, as players are kicked out their parents' homes and set out on the road of life, where they must find a job and transportation while avoiding crises. As decisions made during the game affect each player, the goal of not losing one's "good reputation" becomes more imperative. Runs from one to two hours and is designed for two to six players.

Cheapass Games

Parts Unknown, $6, Aug. Dr. Frankenstein made quite a splash with that monster of his, and now everybody wants to be a mad scientist. In *Parts Unknown,* players are level-headed businessmen suppling body parts to these mad-scientist wannabes.

Eden Studios

Abduction, $10, late summer. In the 68-card stand-alone game, players become the subjects of alien abduction with the goal of escaping the spacecraft at any cost. Cards used to meet the objective include Items (such as Railguns and Dimensional Portals) and Events (such as "No — Take Him," "What's This?," and "Change in Plans"). Locations on the ship include the Examination Room and Breeding Chamber. One deck is required for up to four players, with two decks for five to eight.

LucasArts

Star Wars: Force Commander, fall. The latest in the series of computer games based on the *Star Wars* franchise, this Windows 95-based game allows players to assume the role of a leader in either the Rebel Alliance or the Galactic Empire. Each chapter of the game is set on a different world, has an average of three missions, and spans the entire time period of the *Star Wars* trilogy. Mission objectives include establishing a base, capturing strategic elements, and destroying enemy forces. Additional mission elements can include fighting a delaying action. More than 100 individual *Star Wars* personnel, vehicle, and building units have been used for this game. Vehicles include previously unseen tanks, missile launchers, and troop transports, complemented by walkers, Y-wings, and TIE bombers. In addition, in single-player mode, the game can be played head-to-head over the Internet.

Mayfair

Silverton, $35, Aug. Set in the historic mining areas of Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah, *Silverton* is a game of railroading, mining, and commodity-market manipulation. For one to six players, ages 12 and over.

Settlers of Catan:

Seafarers of Catan, $35, Aug. This expansion adds islands, pirates, gold, and ships to the boardgame. Compatible with the third edition; uses red, white, blue, and orange colors.

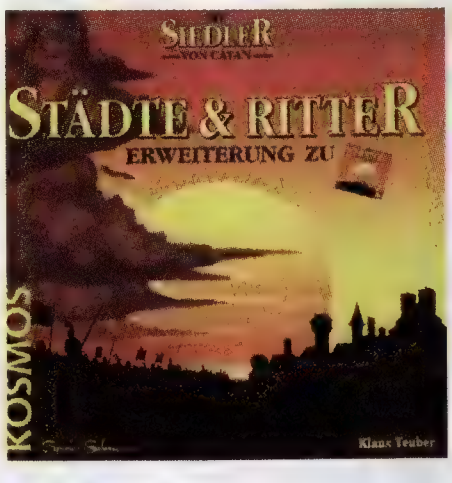
5-6 Player Expansion, $25, German edition, Aug.; English edition, Oct. Allows two additional players to participate. German edition requires both *Siedlers von Catan* and the *Stadte und Ritter* expansion to play.

Cities & Knights, $25, Oct. In this expansion for the English edition, a barbarian army threatens the peaceful island of Catan. Players must build a force of knights to fend them off while competing to build the three great metropolises of Catan.

Empire Builder: *India Rails,* $30, Aug. Build railroads across India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and parts of Pakistan to pick up and deliver loads of gypsum, indigo, jute, and rugs. Now packaged in a box rather than a tube. For two to six players, ages 12 and over.

Quo Vadis: Caesar's Roman Senate, $35, Aug. You play one of the mighty patrician families in the power struggle that will determine the destiny of Rome and the world. To win, you must work your way up the political ladder, moving through committees to reach the Senate. For three to five players, ages 10 and over.

Tigris & Euphrates, $50, Aug. Four ancient kingdoms develop commerce, religion, political might, and food re-



Look for the English version of the ***Cities & Knights*** *expansion for* ***Settlers of Catan*** *this fall.*

sources, trying to maintain a balance between cooperation and conquest until one kingdom reigns supreme. For three to four players, ages 12 and over.

Elixer, $20, Sept. In this card game, players are malicious sprites, casting spells on themselves and their opponents. Uses two decks, one of spells and one of "finds": spell components, magic items, transactions, and other items. The first player to cast all his or her spells wins. For two to five players ages 8 and over. Playing time is 30 to 45 minutes.

Bone-Apetite, $15, Sept. A fast-paced card game in which players control a group of Orcs, Witches, Goblins, Trolls, Dryads, or Pumpkin Heads, competing to survive the lunch hour in the Giants' Dining Room. The last player to have a creature alive wins. For two to six players ages 8 and over. Playing time is 30 to 45 minutes.

Bean-anza, $15, Sept. In this card game for three to five players, ages 8 and up, players try to amass the greatest fortune by trading beans they have grown in their fields. Playing time is 30 to 45 minutes.

Precedence

Fortune Teller, $2.99 or $4.99, Aug. A collectible novelty based on children's "finger fortune" paper toys, *Fortune Teller* is intended for children ages 5 to 13. The first limited edition includes 36 versions of the illustrated folding Fortune Teller, each with unique fortunes and advice, and 36 Legends cards (rare and common). *Fortune Teller* will be available in two different packages: The $2.99 version contains one Fortune Teller and three Legend cards; the $4.99 version contains two Fortune Teller and four Legend cards.

Wizards of the Coast

Art of Magic poker decks, $12.99 Aug. The face cards — jacks, queens kings, and jokers — will be illustrate with art from *Magic,* including the Shi van Dragon, Serra Angel, and Jester' Cap. The decks will be sold in sets o two.

RoboRally: *Radioactive*, $17.99 Aug. The fourth expansion of this boar game introduces new game boards wit radioactive obstacles. For intermediat to advanced players.

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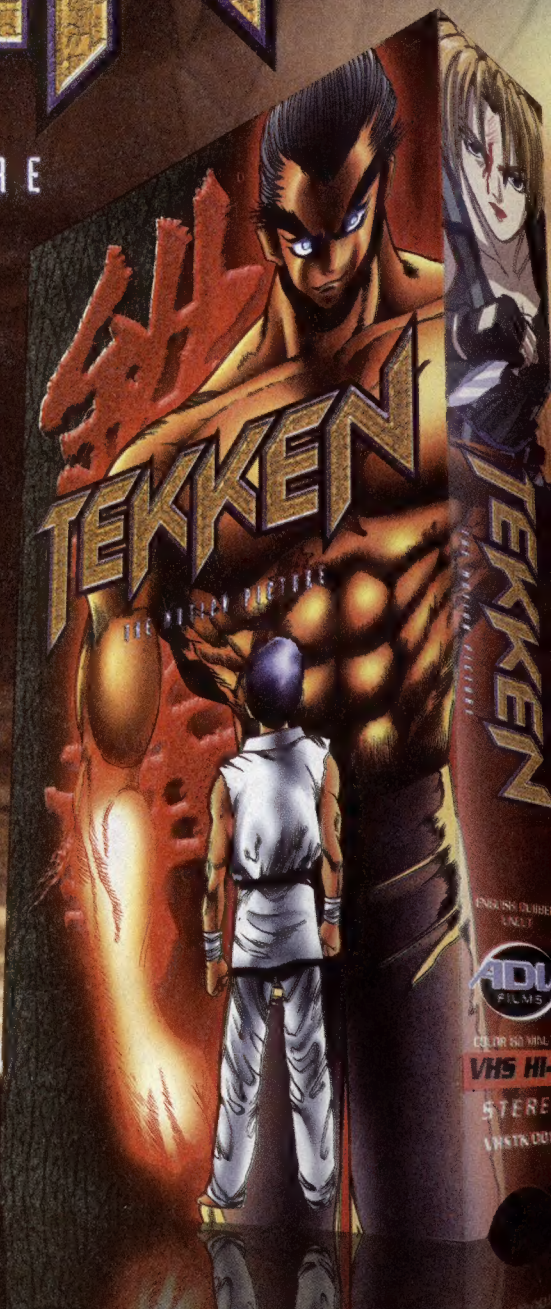

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